

The young women, with their crescent eyebrows and rosebud mouths, are the epitome of the classic Chinese ideal of beauty.

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Nan Luogu Xiang is a place where Old Beijing is being transformed in order that it may be preserved.

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"I used to live in Milan, everyone was rushing. This is China. This is my private tranquility."

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Buffer Zone to Protect Forbidden City

By Chu Meng

The national government is currently considering two proposals to establish a buffer zone to protect the surroundings of the Imperial Palace of the Ming and Qing dynasties, otherwise known as the Forbidden City.

The two proposals were formulated by the administration office of the Forbidden City together with cultural relics experts, and were discussed and approved by the Beijing Municipal Commission of Urban Planning and the Beijing Municipal Cultural Relics Bureau.

The establishment of such a zone was called for at the World Heritage Committee's 28th session, held in East China's Jiangsu Province in July this year. A final proposal must be approved and submitted to UNESCO by February next year.

Two alternative buffer zones

With the aim of keeping maintenance work to a minimum, the first buffer zone proposal essentially covers the area of the old Imperial City, which is already protected under a plan issued by the municipal government in April last year.

This 597-hectare zone incorporates the area between Xidan Dajie and Beihai Dajie, and Chang'an and Ping'an avenues, as well as Tian'anmen Square. It includes the Forbidden City itself, Beihai Park, Zhongnanhai, the Imperial Ancestral Temple and many other key sites, as well as traditional hutong and siheyuan between Chang'an Avenue and Di'anmen Street in Beijing's Xicheng District.

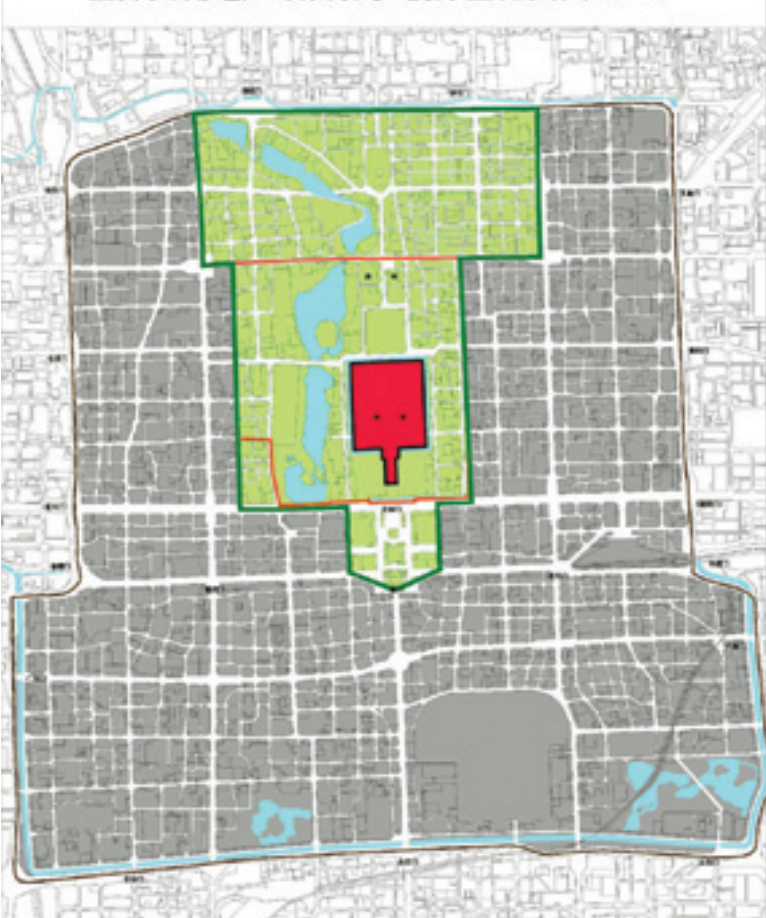
While the first proposal suggests the buffer zone only include the Imperial City area, the second proposal is much more ambitious, covering an area of almost 1,500 hectares. As well as the Imperial City zone it also includes the area to the north, between Ping'an Avenue and the Second Ring Road, and from Xijiekou to Yonghegong Dajie. This option would also serve as a preliminary step for UNESCO to designate the entire Imperial City zone as a World Heritage Site.

Though the first proposal covers a smaller area, it is already better preserved overall, and would be significantly cheaper and easier to implement. While the second proposal is preferable in terms of the amount of area that would be protected, the larger area would make it much harder and more expensive to set up and maintain.

Once the buffer zone is approved by UNESCO, it will be put under strict protection, according to a document released on the website of the Beijing Municipal Cultural Relics Bureau.

Mei Ninghua, director-general of the Beijing Municipal Cultural Relics Bureau, said on CCTV-1's *Morning Headlines* Tuesday, "Constructions within the buffer zone will be limited to a height of nine meters. Some high buildings will possibly be demolished in the area when the plan is

世界文化遗产故宫保护缓冲区范围图 (二)



The two proposed buffer zones, as shown on the Beijing Municipal Cultural Relics Bureau website.



- Forbidden City
- Proposed buffer zone
- Perimeter of the Imperial City

The Forbidden City

Forbidden City, with nearly 1,000 rooms containing ancient furniture and works of art constitutes, is a priceless testimony to Chinese civilization. It was listed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site in 1987, and now has become one of the most popular tourist attractions worldwide.

Hutong and siheyuan

A hutong is an ancient city alley or lane typical in Beijing. Surrounding the Forbidden City, many were built during the Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties. A standard siheyuan is a quadrangle courtyard and consists of houses on its four sides.

agreed upon. And siheyuan within the buffer zone can never be demolished."

Kong Fanzhi, vice-director of the Beijing Municipal Bureau of Cultural Heritage said during the same program, "We do not mean the restriction of construction. But new architecture will be required to fit in with the historical setting of the Forbidden City - a world heritage site - in terms of height, appearance and color."

Local residents are being urged to offer their ideas and comments on the two proposals at the municipal government's website, www.bjww.gov.cn, until September 30. At press time, of the total 5,400 online votes, 93 percent supported the second proposal for the larger protection area.

Overall Protection Urged

With rapid economic development and the 2008 Olympic Games just four years away, Beijing has stepped up its urban construction. How to balance the protection of cultural relics with city development has posed a big challenge for authorities.

Beijing has six world heritage sites. Of these, buffer zones have already been established for the Summer Palace, the Temple of Heaven and the Ming Tombs. "However they are all different from the situation of the Forbidden City, because it is in the center of a residential area and the rights of the people who live there must be taken into concern," Yang Dongping, a specialist on ancient city architecture and protection and vice director-general of Association of Friends of Nature, told *Beijing Today* Tuesday.

Mei Ninghua explained that "the first target is to release population pressure within the area, in order to ease the dense living conditions. At present, a large number of siheyuan have become home for more than four families, which was the original intended capacity. However many are now housing 10 to 20 families, their property rights status is very vague, are they are in a very poor state of repair."

According to Mei, the best solution is to privatize the property rights of these siheyuan. In other words, the local government could grant the property right for one siheyuan to the inhabiting family best able to afford the costs of maintenance and restoration work.

Mei also pointed out, "the biggest frustration in pushing forward the protection work is the maintenance expenditure required for the old siheyuan, which is estimated to be about 30,000 yuan per square meter. Given that the average size is 60 square meters, that works out to 1.8 million for each siheyuan. Therefore, we have to grant the private property right to those who can afford it. Of course the government will help them."

For others who could not qualify for the property rights and would be willing to move to a modern building, the government would also provide a subsidy to help

them purchase a new apartment out of the central area of the city. "When the residents become the owners of the siheyuan, they will be much more inclined to cooperate and with the government to protect those relics," Mei said.

Yang Dongping remarked to *Beijing Today* that the "overall-protection principle is the core of establishing a historical and cultural city of Beijing. This means we should not only consider the relic itself, but also its surrounding environment. It is just like a beautiful nose on the face of a Miss World. Only when you see it with all the other facial features is it beautiful. But if you see it separately, it is not beautiful any more."

Battle to preserve old Beijing

In past years, the surrounding areas of the Forbidden City have suffered from the ill effects of improper urban construction planning and development.

Yang Dongping cited Nanchizi as an example. "It is a very famous residential area with well preserved ancient hutong and siheyuan exhibiting distinct characteristics of the historic cultural city of Beijing. It lies just half a mile to the east of the Forbidden City and is one part of the World Heritage Site."

The Nanchizi area became part of the Forbidden City in the Ming Dynasty. However, like the majority of still standing ancient residences in China, the houses here have not seen proper renovation work for many years, and many are in urgent need of repair. The residents here in ancient times led an inconvenient life because of the high population density and outdated infrastructure. In 2002, the local government granted reconstruction rights for part of the area to real estate companies. As a result, dozens of old courtyards were bulldozed.

This destruction was "extremely regrettable," said Yang, "the hutong and siheyuan are not only a kind of architecture, but also serves as a window into Beijing folk life and an encyclopedia of the history and culture of the city." He stressed that he strongly urged the adoption of the larger buffer zone and believed it was the choice of most citizens, because the larger the zone, the more ancient architecture can be preserved.

"Beijing's six world heritage sites will all have buffer zones or similar type areas by the time the buffer zone plan for the Forbidden City is put into effect. The buffer zone plan for Peking Man Ruins at Zhoukoudian has been decided and the Great Wall has a protection area," Mei Ninghua said in an interview with *Beijing Morning Post* Sunday. Mei says the buffer zone plan for the Forbidden City will be released at the beginning of 2005.

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First China Tennis Open Kicks Off



By Dong Nan

The China Open officially begins today. This is the first time the country has played host to such a large-scale international tennis tournament.

Organizers say the event is heading to become one of the world's top five tennis tournaments, Asia's premier annual sporting event and the leading project in China's preparations for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.

The tournament, featuring

competitions for men, women, seniors and juniors in singles, doubles, and mixed doubles, is being held at the brand new Beijing Tennis Center at Guangcai Lu, Fengtai District.

Top tennis stars competing in the event include this year's Wimbledon winner Maria Sharapova, 14-time Grand Slam winner Serena Williams, Grand Slam title winners Marat Mickailovich Safin, Juan Carlos Ferrero, Carlos Moya, Thomas Johansson, as well as

David Nalbandian, Rainer Schuettler, Dominik Hrbaty, 17-year-old ATP sensation Rafael Nadal, China's own Zheng Jie and Athens gold medal winners Li Ting and Sun Tiantian.

The next three days will see practice and qualifying sessions for the men's singles event, which begins Monday. The women's singles starts on September 19.

For information about the China Open, call 6725 0530, and for tickets, 8518 1201 (English service provided).

Free Personal Classifieds

Beijing Today is launching a free personal classifieds service. For sale and wanted ads, situations wanted and vacant, language exchange and personals, and rentals will be

printed free of charge. Email your personal classifieds (in English and Chinese) to info@ynet.com. Personal classifieds should conform to relevant laws and regulations.

New Olympic Venues Cut from 10 to 5

By Wei Lixin
To optimize the cost of Olympic venue construction, the original plan has been considerably modified. To stage the 2008 Olympics, 30 venues will be needed, of which the municipal government is responsible for the construction of 18.
Originally, 10 new venues were planned, but after a review, the figure has been cut to five; meanwhile, six venues will be based on existing buildings, and seven temporary venues will be erected, as opposed to four.
Deputy major of Beijing Liu Zhihua announced the changes at

the 14th session of the 12th Standing Committee of the Beijing Municipal People's Congress yesterday.
The estimated preliminary cost for venue construction is 11.24 billion yuan, 5.82 billion of which is financed by the municipal and district governments together with the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Games of the 29th Olympiad (BOCOG), while the remaining 5.42 billion will be financed by social investment.
According to Liu, construction costs should be effectively controlled while construction quality is guaranteed. Furthermore, the venues should fit the need of the sports tour-

nament, but post-games utilization should also been taken into account.
To optimize and narrow the costs, the time schedule for construction has also been adjusted. Most Olympic venues will be completed in 2007, except for those that need to be finished by the end of 2006 for use in international competitions.
"Construction will be in full swing next year," said Liu, "so within this year, the optimization plan of all preliminary designs has to be completed, and a comprehensive construction schedule will be worked out on the basis of that plan," he concluded.

Social Security White Paper Published

By James Liu
By the end of 2003, China had accumulated over 130 billion yuan (US \$15.6 billion) in its national social security fund, established in 2000. The figure was revealed in the white paper on social security programs and policies released Tuesday.
The white paper, titled *China's Social Security and Its Policy*, comprises ten sections that spell out what is being done to develop insurance programs for the aged, unemployed, medical care, workers' compensation and maternity care, as well as social welfare, special relief, housing security and social security in rural areas.
China began to reform the planned-economy social security system in the mid-1980s. A basic framework is now in place corresponding to the

market economy system, with the central and local governments sharing specific responsibilities.
Hu Xiaoyi, spokesman for the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, noted that China will gradually improve the individual old-age insurance system.
"At present, people do have their own old-age insurance accounts. However, there is no money in them. This is not the fault of the individuals or the company; it's because the system," Hu said. During the planned economy period, all retirement and old-age insurance was provided by the state and the work unit, "At that time the government didn't open old-age account for individuals," Hu said.
Since 1993 China started to introduce old-age insurance accounts. But as the state had

no insurance capital reserve before, there is no money in these accounts.
Now 300 to 400 billion yuan is collected annually to support 360 million retired people. "All the retired people are getting their pensions. It is the accounts of the people who are still working that are empty," Hu explained, adding that the current situation will be improved.
China is now an aging society. As the aging of the population quickens, the proportion of elderly people is increasing. This trend will peak in the 2030s. To guarantee the basic living standards of the elderly and safeguard their legitimate rights and interests, the establishment of a multi-tiered old-age insurance system marked by sustainable development is the top priority.

Westinghouse Seeks Approval to Build Reactors in China

By Zhao Hongyi
The US government is reportedly ready to clear domestic companies to sell nuclear related technologies and equipment to China, ending a decades-long embargo.
Westinghouse Electric is seeking approval from the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission to sell nuclear power technology, fuel and equipment for two planned nuclear power plants in China. The total transaction volume exceeds \$2.2 billion.
The plants are to be built in Sanmen, Zhejiang Province, and Yangjiang, Guangdong Province, according to Westinghouse spokesman Vaughn Gilbert. The company is expecting to obtain the approval by the end of this year and send bids early next year.
China is inviting overseas

nuclear equipment makers to participate in the country's ambitious nuclear power development initiative.
Two to three nuclear power reactors are to be built annually over the next 15 years, said Zhang Huazhu, chairman of China Atomic Nuclear Authority, at a press conference on September 1 in Beijing.
"China's nuclear power generating capacity may rise from today's 1.7 percent to 4 percent by 2020," Zhang told media.
Vice-president Zeng Qinghong last April told visiting US vice-president Dick Cheney that China planned to build 24 to 30 nuclear-power plants by 2020, at a cost of \$1.5 billion a plant.
Westinghouse is facing fierce competition in the projects from France's Areva and

Atomic Energy Canada. But it promises that it can build a 1,100 megawatt plant that can provide energy to a city of nearly one million people.
Asked whether the US is ready to sell the equipment and technology to China on the same day in Washington, Richard Boucher, spokesman for the US State Department said, "the basic foundations for such sales are already in place."
Boucher was referring to the US-China Agreement for Peaceful Nuclear Cooperation signed in 1998 and the exchange of diplomatic notes in September of 2003, which confirmed conditions and assurances governing transfers of nuclear technology.
But he stressed that all sales will be handled by the government on a case-by-case basis.



A Long March 4-B rocket carrier takes off from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center in Shanxi Province, north China, Thursday, carrying two scientific satellites.
Xinhua Photo

West to East Gas Pipeline Completed

By Zhang Bo
Natural gas from Xinjiang's Tarim Basin has started flowing into Jingbian County, Shaanxi Province, according to a report on Xinhuanet Monday. This marks the completion of the second stage of the west to east natural gas pipeline project.
Work began on the pipeline in July 2002. With Jingbian Station as the linking point, the project is divided into the west line, from Tarim to Jingbian, and the east line, from Jingbian to Shanghai. With the two sections now connected, a solid foundation has been laid for the supply of natural gas to customers in eastern provinces from the west.
The Jingbian Station

is located on the edge of Maowusu Desert, 10 kilometers northeast of Jingbian. Since October 1 last year, when the east line went into operation, Jingbian Station has served as a temporary station to supply natural gas for east China. From December 1, with Jingbian Station as the supplementary gas source, all natural gas transferred to the eastern provinces will come from Tarim.
The pipeline project, originating at Lunnan Oil field in Tarim, Xinjiang, spans 10 provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions, finishing at Baihe, Shanghai, with a total length of over 4,000 kilometers and transmission capacity of 12 billion cubic meters per year.

Internet Porn Producers Face Life Imprisonment

By Wei Lixin
Makers and distributors of pornographic materials disseminated via the internet, mobile phone and other communication devices will be subject to penalties as severe as life imprisonment under a new legal interpretation which took effect Monday.
The legal interpretation is jointly issued by the Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate. It concerns the implementation of laws handling criminal cases on the production, duplication, publication, sale and dissemination of electronic pornographic materials through the Internet, mobile communication terminals and phone-sex services.
The crackdown is part of a renewed campaign for greater control over the Internet by authorities since July this year, which has shut down thousands of por-

nographic websites, thus stepping up surveillance and fortifying filters aimed at shutting out objectionable material.
According to the interpretations, cases involving pornographic websites that have received more than 250,000 hits will be considered "very severe."
Grave cases of non-profit production and dissemination of pornographic materials will also be treated as criminal and subject to punishment.
The interpretation also stipulates that criminal cases involving child pornography, including production, duplication, publishing, sale and dissemination of pornographic materials which depicts sexual behavior by minors; providing direct links to such pornographic materials, as well as the sale or dissemination of pornographic materials to minors, will attract severe punishment.

Measures Taken to Prevent Entry of Bird Flu

By James Liu
A joint notice issued by the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine and the Ministry of Agriculture has ordered the suspension of the import of all poultry and poultry products from South Africa and Malaysia, over concerns about the spread of a highly pathogenic bird flu, Xinhua News Agency reported Tuesday.

Poultry and poultry products shipped before August 1 from South Africa and August 7 from Malaysia are allowed to pass through the quarantine, however those shipped after those dates must be returned to their point of origin or be destroyed.
Agriculture ministries in the two countries last month reported the outbreak of the highly pathogenic bird flu.

Public Security Review

Break-ins in Beijing during the past week mostly occurred at Anzhenli, Nanmofang and Dougezhuang in Chaoyang, Zhanlan Lu in Xicheng, Fangzhuang and Youanmen in Fengtai, as well as Dazhongsi, Yongfeng and Qinglongqiao in Haidian late at night and during the day, while thefts occurred most frequently at Yayuncun in Chaoyang, Beitaipingzhuang and Shuangyushu in Haidian, Xidan in Xicheng and Tiantan in Chongwen.
Xiaoguan in Chaoyang, Nanyuan and Lugouqiao in Fengtai as well as Sijiqing in Haidian were the most common places for auto thefts to take place, mainly at night and in the early morning.
Notable crimes for this week were robberies and thefts by criminals operating in groups targeting accountants going to banks to withdraw or deposit cash.
Robberies and thefts targeting elementary and secondary school students have been the key target for police this week. Police have strengthened inspection of the internal safeguarding measures of schools. Meanwhile, police are also urging students to go home as soon as they get out of school and not to talk to strangers.
(Information from Beijing Public Security Bureau)

ASEAN Recognizes China's Market Economy Status

By Annie Wei
The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) last Saturday announced its recognition of China's status as a market economy at a meeting in Jakarta.
Indonesian industry and trade minister, Rini Soewandi announced the decision at a press conference given by ASEAN economic ministers and China's minister of commerce Bo Xilai.
Three ASEAN countries, Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand, announced their recognition of China as a market economy earlier this year. This new announce-

ment brings in a further seven countries; Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, the Philippines and Vietnam.
Bo Xilai was quoted by *Xinhua News Agency* as saying that China-ASEAN trade volume represents 11 percent of China's overall foreign trade, which is expected to increase considerably in the near future. He expressed the belief that once both sides reach agreement on goods and services trading, there will be even more business between China and ASEAN.
Xu Ningning, director of

the ASEAN-China Business Council told *Beijing Today* Tuesday that China-ASEAN business increased 40 percent from January to June. China's imports from ASEAN are greater in volume than its exports, but the exports are growing.
China's main imports from ASEAN are crude oil, natural gas, wood, rubber, palm oil and electronics. The main export is machinery.
With recognition as a market economy, the number of anti-dumping cases between China and member countries of ASEAN is expected to fall, Xu added.

China Grants Gates Foundation \$100 Million QFII Quota

By Chu Meng

China's State Administration of Foreign Exchange (SAFE) announced last Friday it had given a \$100 million quota to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to invest in China's capital market. The foundation would be able to use the quota to buy stocks in renminbi and bonds under the Qualified Foreign Institutional Investor, or QFII scheme, the government organization said.

The announcement made the foundation, co-founded by Microsoft chairman Bill Gates and his wife in 2000, the first non-financial institution to take part in China's year-old QFII plan. With an investment volume of \$100 million, it has the largest quota of the first 17 foreign institutions to be approved by SAFE.

Chinese electronics giant Changhong is widely expected to be the Gates Foundation's first investment in China's A share market because the foundation made moves to purchase



Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates and his wife established their foundation in 2000.

Photo by Photocom

state-owned shares in Changhong before getting the QFII quota.

"Though the foundation has had some dealings with Changhong, that by

no means indicates it has any intention to deepen cooperation with companies in China's home appliance industry," security analyst Shui Pi told *Beijing Today* this Wednesday.

China's foreign exchange regulator can approve QFII quotas from a minimum of \$50 million up to a ceiling of \$800 million. Before the introduction of the scheme a year ago, foreign investors were restricted to hard-currency B shares as part of the country's strict controls on cross-border capital flows.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation had \$26.8 billion in assets at the end of 2003 and distributed total grants of \$1.18 billion, mostly for health and education, last year.

The introduction of more foreign institutional investors was intended to stabilize domestic markets and bring expertise to the country's unruly securities and asset management sectors, *Beijing Youth Daily* said.

Insurers' Repayment Capabilities under Scrutiny

By Sun Yongjian

China's insurance industry watchdog has started more carefully supervising three major domestic life insurers due to their potentially insufficient repayment capabilities, domestic media have reported.

The three companies under scrutiny by the China Insurance Regulatory Commission (CIRC) were China Life Group, Xinhua Life and China Pacific Insurance (Life) Company (CPIC Life), *Beijing Youth Daily* said on Monday.

"This doesn't mean that something serious has taken place, like some domestic media reports have said," Hao Yansu, dean of the insurance department at Central Financial University and the independent director of Xinhua Life told *Beijing Today* on Tuesday.

"Insufficient repayment capability doesn't mean crises of repayment capability. The watchdog hasn't issued any warnings yet."

Hao added, "Xinhua's problems arose from expansion of business scale in recent years due to its target of being listed in the domestic stock market. Once it is listed, it will be beyond all questions. The company has an eight-year record of profit earning."

BOC Opens Posts to Top Global Talent

By Sun Yongjian

The Bank of China announced the conditions of its global recruitment for three senior positions at the bank's semi-independent Hong Kong branch through its website on Tuesday.

The three executive jobs – vice president, general risk director and operating director – became vacant when their former occupants, Zhu Chi, Ding Yansheng and Zhang Debao, respectively, were arrested for embezzlement and other white-collar crimes earlier this summer.

Applicants for the vice president post must have rich experience in other large-scale financial institutions, the bank announced, and the bar is set almost equally high for the two other jobs.

Salary numbers were not revealed. BOC spokesman Wang Zhaowen said remuneration packages would be attractive, but declined to give any details.

Phoenix Joins Beijing Radio in Local Airwaves

By Annie Wei

Beijing People's Broadcasting Station (Beijing Radio) and Phoenix Satellite Television Holding signed a deal for strategic collaboration in broadcasting and advertising on Monday during the Eighth Beijing-Hong Kong Economic Cooperation Symposium in Hong Kong.

The plan calls for Phoenix, a Hong Kong-based affiliate of Rupert Murdoch's News Corp, and Beijing Radio, a domestic broadcasting leader, to set up a joint venture, Beijing Synchronous Advertising and Radio Co, the *Beijing News* reported on Monday.

Wang Qiu, vice-president of Beijing Radio, was appointed chairman of the new company. BPBS would invest 30 million yuan to hold a 55 percent stake in the company and Phoenix would take the remaining 45 percent share, Wang was quoted as saying in the article.

A report from an AC Nielson media company issued in July said that China was the world's second largest radio market, trailing only the United States.

Gehua Cable TV Rolls into Media Group

By James Liu

Beijing Gehua Cable TV Network Company announced last Friday that local companies Beijing Gehua Culture Development Group, Beijing TV Station, and Beijing Radio were merging together into the Beijing All Media and Culture Group (BAMC).

BAMC would hold a controlling 66.48 percent stake in Gehua Cable, the company announced, with Beijing TV Station and Beijing Radio each holding 0.97 percent shares. Completion of the move required approval from the China Security Regulation Commission (CSRC), the Xinhua news agency said last Friday.

In 2003, Gehua Cable earned 200 million yuan in net profit in the local market, but its position has been challenged by the June entrance of Beijing Netcom into the city's Internet video and audio service sector.



The trademark battle could result in the disappearance of the UBC Coffee name throughout the country.

Photo by Photocom

Conflict Brewing over UBC Coffee Trademark

By Sun Yongjian

Famed domestic trademark UBC Coffee, registered by Shanghai UBC Coffee Food Co., is in danger of being canceled by the State Administration for Industry and Commerce (SAFIC), the *Beijing Morning Post* reported on Monday.

Hundreds of coffee shop restaurants operate around the country under the UBC name, which could disappear as a result of the conflict.

"Cancellation of the brand could cause great losses for the owner of the trademark, franchisees and consumers," Liu Fei, a professor at the business school of Beijing Technology and Business University told *Beijing Today* on Thursday.

Hangzhou UBC Coffee Food Co. and its owner, Chen Wenmin, are attacking the mark on claims they formerly owned the copyright to the UBC Coffee name.

SAFIC issued a judgment on July 2 ruling that Shanghai UBC Coffee registered the contested trademark in 2002 without legal authorization from Chen, its former owner, and calling for its cancellation.

That ruling came nearly five months after the No.2 Intermediate People's Court of Shanghai rejected Chen's requests to negate Shanghai UBC Coffee's trademark, according to information provided by Shanghai UBC.

The head of Shanghai UBC Coffee's admin-

istration department, surnamed Liu, said the company had filed a countersuit in Beijing and hearings should start this month.

"We are facing a sudden attack! We have tens of thousand of employees and 600 branch restaurants. If the trademark is canceled, what are they going to do?" Liu said.

Liu said that Shanghai UBC was the only legal operator of the UBC Coffee mark and that the Hangzhou UBC moniker had been deemed illegal by authorities, forcing the company to change its name to C.Straits Coffee.

Lu Weiye, vice president of Hangzhou UBC Coffee Food Co, painted a very different picture.

"There are many UBC Coffee companies across the country, such as Hangzhou UBC, Jiangsu UBC and Guangdong UBC, all of which exist and operate completely legally," Lu said.

"The Hangzhou UBC name has not been canceled nor changed. C. Straits Coffee is another brand created last year by a Hangzhou UBC Coffee shareholder."

Lu said that Chen first registered the UBC Coffee mark in Taiwan, but the mainland registration was done in the late 1990s by another company connected to Shanghai UBC, which eventually claimed mainland ownership of the name.

If Chen's suit was successful, Lu said, the trademark could disappear from the domestic market.

Chang'an Recalls 150,000 Alto Cars

By James Liu

Chang'an Suzuki Automobile Co, a Sino-Japanese joint venture, announced Wednesday it was recalling 157,480 Alto cars due to potential defects in their fuel systems. It is the largest auto recall ever in China by sheer number of vehicles.

The affected Alto cars, equipped with electronically fuel-injected engines, were produced from September 4, 1999 to March 26, 2004. The cars's fuel pipes could erode with time, the company said at a Wednesday news conference, Xinhua news agency reported.

"Owners of affected Altos can get their cars checked and repaired for free at Chang'an Suzuki's service stations between September 9 and March 31, 2005," the company announced.

Chang'an Suzuki said the recall was a preemptive move and that no cars in the market had shown problems.

Some 33,700 affected vehicles are from Beijing.

Forbes' City Ranking Raises Eyebrows

By Wei Lixin

Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province ranks No. 1 in Forbes' latest listing of the top commercial cities in the Chinese mainland, released last Saturday, followed by Ningbo in Zhejiang and Dalian, Liaoning Province. The fourth place ranking of Shanghai, Beijing's sixth place spot and Guangzhou's 14th place ranking have been met with widespread surprise.

Magazine sources said that while Shanghai was tops in China in terms of many business factors, soaring housing prices, constant traffic congestion and its enormous population all affected the city's overall business performance, according to a *Beijing Youth Daily* article.

The ranking was formulated based on surveys from 191 Chinese cities whose 2002 GDPs surpassed 10 billion yuan (\$1.21 billion). The surveys reviewed indexes such as private economy strength, market scale and potential, human resources quality, operating costs and traffic to find China's top 100 commercial cities.

List of Top 500 Chinese Companies Made Public

By Sun Yongjian

The China Enterprise Confederation and China Enterprise Directors Association issued their rankings of the top 500 Chinese enterprises of 2004 last Sunday, *Beijing Star Daily* reported the following day.

The coveted top spot went to State Grid Corporation of China, displacing last year's winner China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC). State Grid got the nod after earning a 46th place position in the 2004 Fortune Global 500 list.

Of the 500 companies, 101 are new to the list and 14.8 percent are private enterprises, up from 13.8 percent in 2003 and 3.8 percent in 2002.

The overall turnover of the top 500 enterprises for 2004 totaled 9 trillion yuan and has shown average annual growth of 21 percent in the past three years, the newspaper said.

The absence of some major Chinese enterprises, such as CNPC Insurance, Shanghai Electronic (Group) Corp, Shanghai Tobacco Group, however, has led some market analysts to raise doubts about the list's authoritativeness, it said.

A confederation insider who said her name was Zhang told *Beijing Today* on Wednesday that appraisals were done on a voluntary basis and that some large companies opted out of participation.

Some 18 ranked enterprises have reported deficits totaling 6.7 billion yuan and 100 of the listed companies have suffered profit drops in the past year, a report in the *Economic Reference* newspaper said on Tuesday.

Qualified Property Management Urged

By Zhao Hongyi

More than 200 property managers, officials and developers appealed for high quality property management yesterday in Beijing.

Property management service sector has been prospering in China. Property management companies has rocketed to 2361 in Beijing alone, covering 74 percent of the city's residential properties and employs 200,000 workforce, according to Zhou Jinsong, deputy director of residential community management office under the municipal government.

"But we need, urgently, to improve the quality of our service," Zhou admitted.

"In this regard, we openly welcome the sophisticated management and new concepts from abroad," Zhou said.

Washington, September 7 (AP) – Oil prices fell Tuesday as the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries’ (OPEC) President Purnomo Yusgiantoro said supply was growing faster than demand and traders breathed easier knowing that petroleum production in the Gulf of Mexico did not suffer as a result of Hurricane Frances.

“There’s no news to keep prices from falling,” said Ed Silliere, vice president of risk management at Energy Merchant in New York, noting that the market has even shrugged off a recent pipeline sabotage in Iraq.

Light crude oil for October delivery dropped 68 cents to settle at \$43.31 per barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

With only a thin margin of spare output capacity worldwide, energy markets have been jittery all summer due to the possibility of output disruptions in Iraq, Russia and Venezuela.

But with the exception of sporadic export troubles out of Iraq, the global

supply chain has remained intact. Speaking at the World Energy Congress in Sydney on Tuesday, Yusgiantoro said world oil production is running “1.5 million barrels every day above demand based on our forecasts.” Analysts say daily global oil demand is around 82 million barrels.

Yusgiantoro added that oil production in the 11 OPEC nations, includ-

Oil Prices Fall

ing Iraq, is 29 million to 30 million barrels a day. OPEC oil ministers are set to meet in Vienna, Austria later this month to discuss ways to drive down prices. (Brad Foss)

Analyst’s take:

Current high oil prices are mainly driven by market speculation. Political and military turmoil is the main factor behind this.

Considering the rapidly increasing



OPEC Secretary-General Purnomo Yusgiantoro of Indonesia at the 19th World Energy Congress in Sydney September 8, 2004. (Reuters Photo)

oil consumption worldwide and endless unrest in Iraq, we cannot see the current oil-price drop lasting over the mid and long run.

China has become the second-largest oil consumer in the world, with oil imports at 56.34 million tons in the first six months this year, mainly from the Middle East and Africa. Total imports in the whole year are expected to exceed 100 million tons.

The oil-price increase on the world market will definitely bring pressures on production costs, investment and overall economic growth in China. This explains why the country is trying its best to find oil offshore, in Russia, Central Asia, Southeast Asia, Latin America and Africa.

This also reminds China of its natural resource waste, energy price system restructuring, importance of developing alternative energy and maturity of its future oil market.

— Ha Jiming & Fan Weiwei, chief economists, China International Capital Corp.

Singh to Lobby UN for India Council Seat

Washington, DC, September 2 (UPI) – Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh will lobby to make India a permanent member of the Security Council during his first visit to the UN General Assembly later this month, South Asian diplomatic sources told

United Press International.

Briefing journalists on Singh’s visit earlier this week, Indian diplomats in the US capital said India would actively participate in the debate for reforming the United Nations during the forthcoming session

of the UN General Assembly.

New Delhi wants the 15-member Security Council to be expanded to include India and some other aspirants. Besides reiterating India’s call for an expansion of the Security Council, Singh is also expected to

call for a balance between the United Nations’ peace and security agenda and its development plans, sources said. Like several other prominent members of the world body, Indians also feel that the United Nations is too focused on security and peacekeeping.

Local Report:

Regarding the Security Council expansion issue, different countries have their own considerations. Germany and Japan consider themselves as top economic countries in the world, and contribute greatly to the UN.

India, Brazil and South Africa, on the other hand, fancy themselves as regional giants.

What’s more, Egypt and Nigeria believe they are more qualified to represent Africa than South Africa.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan indicated that the expansion must give prominence to the principles of “one keystone” - increasing permanent seats - and “two balances” - that the council should better represent both developed countries and developing countries. Moreover, the regional imbalance should be ameliorated, as well.

Following the “two balance” principles, developing countries such as India, Brazil, South Africa, etc. are more qualified to secure permanent seats.

— China Internet Information Centre, September 7, 2004 (Wei Lixin)

Police officers control crowds outside the Australian Embassy (left in background) following a bomb blast, September 9, 2004, in Jakarta, Indonesia. A powerful explosion in central Jakarta killed at least 6, more than 50 were wounded, and extensive damage was caused to nearby buildings. Getty Images



Who Will Take Over Abbey National?

The Spanish bank Santander and a UK banking group, HBOS, are vying for the takeover of the British bank, Abbey National.

Although the European Competition Commissioner Mario Monti appeared to endorse the 8.8-billion pound takeover by Santander, HBOS criticized the move September 5, 2004.

Monti was quoted in the UK-based *Business Telegraph* Monday as saying that it is one of the first cross-border transactions in the banking sector, which will increase the integration of the common market and financial services.

In the same article, HBOS spokesman Shane O’Riordain was also quoted as saying that they were alarmed to see that Monti seemed to have made a

decision about the proposed merger before an official comment from the European Commission was released. O’Riordain added that it’s very important for decisions on mergers to be taken in an open and transparent way.

HBOS, which boasts 22 million customers and a rapport with two out of every five households in the United Kingdom, is considering a rival bid for Abbey as well, according to the *Business Telegraph*.

Although analysts believe HBOS will not miss a rare opportunity to acquire a close competitor, HBOS is valued at only eight times the prospective earnings compared to Abbey’s 14. If HBOS’ purchase is permitted by regulators, it will possess 34 percent of Britain’s mortgages.

Analyst’s take:

The idea of building a European Consolidated Service Market was introduced in 1993. It includes four major service fields in capital, products, finance and employment.

The Abbey takeover is rivaled between Santander and HBOS. If HBOS acquires Abbey, it would obtain 34 percent of all British mortgages, which would point to a monopoly. The other competitor, Santander, is facing legal action by a local association in its own country.

Bank mergers have been accepted in the European Union for a long time. But if a bank merger exceeds a certain percentage on the financial market and forms a big bank group, it would cause the European Competition to wonder whether it had violated monopoly laws.

— Professor Zhang Jianxiong, Institute of European Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (Annie Wei)

West Africa to Launch New Regional Currency

Conakry, September 3 (IRIN) – Six countries in West Africa said last Friday they were still determined to launch a common currency July 1, 2005 despite slow progress towards achieving this goal, which has already been delayed for two years.

Guinean President Lansana Conte, the new chairman of the West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ), said after a summit meeting on the organization in Conakry that much remained to be done before the new currency, the Eco, could be launched in 10 months’ time.

But he and several other speakers at the meeting stressed their determination not to miss next year’s deadline following the orga-

nization’s failure to launch a single currency by the initial target date of 2003.

“If this venture fails again, then we have failed our citizens,” said Gambian President Yahay Jammeh.

WAMZ is dominated by Nigeria, Africa’s largest oil producer and most populous country, with an estimated 126 million people, reported Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), part of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Its other members are Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Gambia and Guinea.

Analyst’s take:

The common currency zone to be formed in the five dominant

English-speaking countries is regarded as the second single-currency zone after the African franc zone formed by Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

As a new progress in the process of economic integration of African countries, the move will play an active role in establishing a single currency and common market on the African continent under the general structure of a New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) program, which was sponsored by the African Union (AU).

Meanwhile, this progress will make international trade, currency settlements and travel to the partner countries much more convenient, which is vital to the economic development of local areas.

— Yao Guimei, deputy director of the Study Division of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (Sun Yongjian)

Ex-WorldCom CEO Wants Witness Immunity

New York, September 8 (Reuters) – Lawyers for former WorldCom Chief Executive Bernard Ebbers are seeking immunity for two witnesses who they believe can clear their client of fraud charges related to the company’s 11-billion-dollar accounting scandal, according to court papers filed on Wednesday.

The papers, which included motions to have charges against Ebbers dismissed, asked a judge to order “the government to grant immunity to two defense witnesses possessing exculpatory evidence.”

The witnesses, identified as former chief operating officer Ronald Beaumont and former head of revenue accounting Ronald Lomenzo, could testify that Ebbers did not decide the accounting policies at the centre of the company’s scandal, the papers said.

Ex-Star Banker Quattrone Gets 18 Months

New York, September 8 (AP) – Frank Quattrone, whose deft deal-making made him an investment-banking star during the Internet stock bubble and a millionaire many times over, was sentenced Wednesday to 1.5 years in prison for obstructing justice.

The sentence makes Quattrone, 48, the most prominent Wall Street figure since junk-bond king Michael Milken to face time behind bars.

The 18-month sentence far exceeds the recommendation of federal probation officials, who had suggested the judge give the ex-banker five months in prison and five months of house arrest.

The case hinged on a 22-word e-mail forwarded by Quattrone to bankers at Credit Suisse First Boston in December 2000, encouraging them to “clean up” their files. The bank was under federal investigation at the time.

(Erin McClam)

\$451.5M Paid in Fund Scandal

September 8 (USA TODAY) – In the third-largest settlement to date in the mutual fund-trading scandal, Invesco Funds Group and AIM Advisors announced a \$451.5-million deal with state and federal regulators Tuesday.

Invesco had more than 40 arrangements with big customers, letting them dart in and out of its funds - a practice called market timing. That’s not illegal, but Invesco’s prospectus forbids market timing. If you do that, you can’t make exceptions for big clients.

Invesco’s exceptions were called Special Situations. They were not disclosed to investors or the independent members of the boards of the funds, the SEC alleged.

Market timing increases costs and dilutes gains of other investors.

(John Waggoner and Christine Dugas)

VW Says 30,000 Jobs at Risk If Talks Fail

Frankfurt (Reuters) – Volkswagen AG has warned its German workers that more than 30,000 jobs could be lost if they don’t agree to a pay freeze and other concessions, raising the stakes ahead of negotiations due to start next week.

The talks are due to start on September 15, 2004 against a backdrop of declining sales of Volkswagen cars in the key markets of Germany, China and the United States and pressure across German manufacturing industries for employees to work more for less pay.

Volkswagen, partly owned by the state of Lower Saxony, has asked 103,000 workers at six plants in western Germany to forego wage hikes for two years as part of a broader plan to lop about 2 billion euros (\$2.41 billion) from labour costs by 2011.

(Christiaan Hetzner and Mark Thompson)

Australia Sheds 6,600 Jobs in August

September 9 (Bloomberg) – Australia unexpectedly lost jobs in August, suggesting Asia’s fifth-largest economy may be slowing from its fastest annual growth in two years. The currency fell and bonds gained.

Employment declined 6,600, the third drop in four months, the Australian Bureau of Statistics said in Sydney. The unemployment rate was unchanged at 5.7 percent as fewer people looked for work. Employment rose 15,200 in July.

Job creation and interest rates are key election issues for Prime Minister John Howard, whose Liberal-National government is running level in polls with the opposition Labor Party before next month’s vote.



Photo by Xu Wantao

Digital Booths Already Out of Date?

By Zhou Ying

As part of the run-up to the "Digital Olympics" in 2008, Beijing authorities will establish a total of 600 "Digital Beijing information booths" to provide public information and convenient value-added services in downtown areas by the end of this year.

The first 300 of the high-tech booths were erected in Beijing last year. Initial local press reports said the touch-screen terminals provided information about dining, accommodation and entertainment venues in the city, maps, electronic utility payments and other public services.

"Using these information booths,

local citizens can even pay their water and electricity bills online," a *Beijing Star Daily* article said this January.

The public, however, has proved less than receptive to the booths, investigations conducted by the *Beijing News* and published last Sunday showed. Existing facilities are rarely used and most people interviewed by the newspaper's reporters had never heard of the booths, let alone had any idea how to take advantage of what they have to offer.

Some services were no longer available and booths only listed around 20 of the city's hundreds of shopping centers and movie theaters while giv-

ing out of date bus schedule and route information, the investigation revealed.

Ma Weiguo, manager of Information and Technology Co., the main investor in and operator of the Digital Booth project, told the *Beijing News* that his company was instructed to take fiscal and operational responsibility for the booths by the municipal government.

"We invested more than 40 million yuan to launch the first 300 booths last year and our annual maintenance fees are around 10 million yuan. We can't earn a profit on the project for now and the company is running in

the red," Ma said.

Because the booths were conceived as a public project, the Beijing government should be responsible for solving major problems, not the company, he added. "The government should act as coordinator."

Ma also said that the electronic utility payment services had never been launched because payments received by his company from telecom and electricity providers were not sufficient to cover China Union Pay's service charges.

"We are talking with related departments about when such services can be provided to the public," he said.

Chinese Beauty Crowned

By Li Xi

Monday evening was a night to remember for Chinese modeling, when Li Zining was crowned the New Silk Road Model Look competition champion, making her the first domestic model ever to win a prestigious international model search.

Nearly 60 women from 30 countries participated in the event in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province and were judged by a panel of international celebrities.



Runner-up Govenko Zanna (right), winner Li Zining (middle) and third-place model Kwon Hyun Ji (right)

Photo by Photocom

Pay Day Comes Two Years Late for Jilted Migrant Workers

By Dong Nan

A group of 100 migrant workers from Anhui Province were finally given 1 million yuan in back wages owed them for nearly two years on Monday. The cash transfer closed the books on a case in which a local developer refused to pay 500 migrant workers for a construction project completed in 2002 until ordered to do so by a Beijing court last December.

The jilted construction workers signed contracts with the Anhui-based Third Construction Company of Maanshan in November 2001 to build an apartment complex for local housing developer Beijing Ju'anjinrun Corp. But when the project was completed the following September, Ju'anjinrun refused to turn over the due 5 million yuan in wages to the construction firm.

By the end of 2002, the workers still had not receive a red cent and could not even afford to travel back home to spend Spring Festival with their families.

To the rescue came the local media. Newspapers and television programs began reporting the story,

calling for society to help the workers get what was owed them. In January 2003, the Beijing Legal Assistance Station for Workers from Other Regions offered them free legal counsel.

With that organization's help, the Anhui construction company filed a suit against the Beijing developer in April 2003 and won the case. But still Ju'anjinrun did not turn over the money, until the stepped in on December 5 last year and ordered the company to pay.

Before Spring Festival this year, the developer forked out 4 million yuan, which was turned over to the waiting workers. With Monday's 1 million yuan, the defaulting firm finally completed the payments.

"We win at last!" Gao Janguo, a representative of the 100 workers, told the media on Monday. "I want to tell all migrant workers that the law is just and can help solve our troubles. We must learn to better protect people's legal rights."

After they got their money, the 100 workers beat gongs and drums outside the court to show their appreciation.



Pleased migrant workers march and hoist a banner thanking the court for getting their long-owed money. Photo by Cao Boyuan

Police Teach Ins, Outs of Chinese Law

By Li Xi

Foreign affairs police officers from the Exit-Entry Administration lectured foreign students on different aspects of the Chinese constitution and the country's law on Tuesday at Beijing Normal University.

In attendance were nearly 400 recently-arrived students from Europe, Japan, and Korea, so the officers presented their speeches in English, Japanese, and Korean.

Topics covered simple visa procedures, laws related to the everyday lives of foreign students, the dangers of exchanging money on the black market and how to get a license for a pet dog. Officers told the impressionable students to always ask for receipts in taxes, because the little tickets hold valuable information that



Photo by Lou Qiyong

makes it possible to track down a cab after a passenger left something precious inside.

"I think most foreign students who break the law here don't do so on purpose, they just don't know enough about Chinese law. So an event like this can be really helpful and

useful," opined one European student.

Officers from the Exit-Entry Administration of the Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau have given nearly 300 lectures on China's legal system at around 100 universities and colleges since 2002.

Artists' Son Busts Imposter Painting

By Wang Fang

An art auction at the Guangzhou Painting Academy Museum was hit by controversy last Sunday afternoon when the son of a famed contemporary artist identified one of his father's supposed paintings up for sale as a forgery, the Guangzhou-based *Xinxi Times* newspaper said on Monday.

When the auctioneer at the Guangdong Zhongyi Auction Company-organized event prepared to start bidding on a painting by artist Zhou Yansheng at 3,800 yuan, a man stood up and shouted, "That is a fake!"

The whistle-blower was the artist's son, Zhou Enli, who proceeded to show the audience a paper written by his father stating the work was a forgery.

He then called the authorities. Police and officers from the local administration for industry and commerce later arrived

at the scene and confiscated the painting for investigation.

Zhou Yansheng was tipped off a day before the auction by an anonymous caller that a copy of one of his works was being shown in the preview show, the younger Zhou told the *Xinxi Times* on Saturday. The father asked his son to go to the preview venue and snap a photograph of the painting.

The photo was all the evidence the artist needed to confirm the painting was a fake and decided to send his son to the auction to unmask the fraud.

Dong Xian'an, art director at Guangdong Zhongyi Auction, said many famous paintings and artworks around the country were in the hands of ordinary people and that checking the authenticity of every piece was impossible. However, when asked why Zhou Yansheng had never been asked to identify his own

work, Dong kept silent.

One auction participant said afterwards that some people in the audience figured the painting was a fake, because no authentic work of Zhou Yansheng would go for less than 10,000 yuan, the newspaper said. He noted that the auction included other art of questionable origins, such as works by masters Qi Baishi, Xu Beihong, Guan Shanyue and Zhang Daqian flagged with starting prices of only 200 yuan.

Most of the bidders were not concerned with authenticity, they only wanted to pick up works for a steal and then sell them again at much higher prices, he speculated.

Zhou Enli demanded the forgery be turned over to his father, because it could damage the artist's reputation and violate consumers' interests. He said if the auction company did not hand over the fake, he would take the matter to court.

Phoenix TV Exec Murder Trial Opens

By Dong Nan

Seven suspects charged with robbing and murdering Zhou Yinan, former vice president of the Hong Kong-based Phoenix cable television network, two members of his family and two other people stood before the Shenzhen Intermediate People's Court this Monday.

The murders occurred in Shenzhen on May 26. Zhou, 56, was found dead from dozens of stab wounds alongside his wife and four-year-old daughter, his accountant and a 16-year-old housekeeper. The murderers stole money, credit cards and other items worth a total of 6 million yuan from the victims.

The seven suspects were arrested one week after the murders, but details on the case were only made public at Monday's opening court hearing.

Wu Yongchui, the sole female suspect, was an acquaintance and frequent mah-joong partner of Zhou's wife, Xiang Yongjin, court records said. She stood accused of providing fellow suspect Luo Jun with details about Zhou's family and home and helped plan the crimes.

On the afternoon of May 26, Luo and three accomplices, Zhang Tao, Zheng An and Hu Gang, entered Zhou's apartment after tricking the housekeeper into opening the door by claiming they were delivering a tank of drinking water.

They then patiently waited until Zhou and the other victims returned home, at which point they grabbed them and forced them to turn over their credit cards and disclose the cards' pass codes. Luo left the apartment to check if the codes were correct, and even though satisfied, he called his accomplices and ordered them to kill Zhou and the others.

Later, the two other suspects, Xi Jiangzheng and Wang Bo, helped Luo and the others hide their stolen money.

Before the court, all the suspects confessed to the crimes except for Wu, who said Luo forced her to participate. But when a public prosecutor asked her, "Were you forced to use their credit cards to purchase things?" she fell silent.

The court will issue its judgment of the seven accused within the next 10 weeks.

Riding the Writing Train

By Zhao Hongyi

Eight writers, six Chinese cities and many, many hours on trains has proven a recipe for excellent reading.

The professional writers, four Chinese and four from the UK, traveled the country by train earlier this year and then wrote volumes about their impressions of China and the six cities visited during the trip. A bilingual anthology of their writings from the trip was published recently and two of the authors were on hand at the Wangfujing Bookstore last Saturday for the book's local launch.

The "Writer's Train" campaign, sponsored by the British Council and the Beijing-based Chinese Writers Association, took the subjects to Shanghai, Beijing, Chongqing, Kunming, Guangzhou and Hong Kong. The writers that participated in the literary adventure were China's Chen Dan-yan, Ye Yanbin, Zhang Zhe and Zhang Mei and Toby Litt, Sinead Morrissey, Susan Elderkin and Romesh Gunasekera from the UK.

The anthology, titled simply *Writer's Train*, is a collection of their fascinating photos and writings from the trip.

"It was a unique opportunity to taste a new experience," Gunasekera, a native of Sri Lanka who emigrated to the Philippines and now lives in the UK, said at the book release.

Asked why the tour was done by train, Zhang said it was the organizers' decision. "It was cheap and gave us the time to think and write," Gunasekera noted.

Big Book Piques Interest in China's Publishing Market

By James Liu

A new English-language book on navigating this country's publication market has attracted interest from international publishers and others intent on understand the potentially lucrative market.

Publishing in China is the first book to provide in-depth analysis of China's publishing industry while targeting an international audience. Its author, Xin Guangwei, was on hand to meet readers at the 11th Beijing International Book Fair from September 2 to 6 in the Beijing Exhibition Center.

In the book, Xin presents a well-rounded depiction of the current status of China's publication market, along with analyses of trends, the impact of China's World Trade Organization entry and movements towards integrating with the markets of Taiwan and Hong Kong.

Though priced at a relatively steep 680 yuan, (\$80), 24 copies of the book have been sold to foreign buyers and domestic publishing houses, Nie Jingqing, director of the book department at China National Publication Import & Export Group, told *Beijing Today* on Thursday.

Xin, an employee of the General Administration of Press and Publication's book publication department since 1991, has written several other books about publishing.

By Gareth George / Annie Wei

Athens 2004 has broken all previous sponsorship records, having garnered 143 percent of the Organizing Committee's objective in a full 12 months before the games. The Olympics seems to be attracting the sponsors' dollars like never before.

When Beijing hosts the games in 2008, should China set an example to the rest of the world by refusing sponsorship from companies whose products are not compatible with a healthy lifestyle, or is it more important to put on a well-funded, well-run event for the benefit of the spectators – regardless of who pays the bills?

It's no secret that sugary, carbonated soft drinks and cheap, fatty hamburgers are not exactly synchronous with training to compete in world-class athletic events. Yet Coca Cola and Macdonald's are the companies that (because of the legislation on what they can say about their own products' merits) find it most desirable to associate themselves with the Olympic values of youth, health, sporting excellence, global unity and winning.

Coca Cola's official statement on the subject at the time of the Sydney Olympics was: "The opportunity to associate our brands with the core values and the powerful and relevant imagery associated with the Olympics in the nearly 200 countries in which we operate remains the focal point of our association with the Games."

Surely, any company that has designs on being seen as a global brand would welcome the opportunity for association. "You're there to be seen in the global league and reinforce your identity as a global citizen," said Hans Arnold, head of consulting at the international branding specialists Enterprise IG. "The Olympics are a great arena where you demonstrate your global capability." And what's so wrong with that? Isn't this just how marketing, how advertising, works?

But perhaps the question is beyond the potential embarrassment these major corporations may cause the Olympics, beyond them pulling out and lessening the impact of the games. The Olympic ideal is special. It represents honest competition, teamwork, global unity, the pursuit of excellence and courage.

Doesn't the idea of huge, multinational, fast-food companies paying through the nose to leech off these values on billions of television screens and billboard posters across the world smack of hypocrisy? Are today's children – not just in China but across the world – being implanted with subconscious ties between these companies and the purity of sports, which just don't exist? Is there some moral question we should consider – namely, do we have a responsibility to protect the young from hardball marketing techniques intended to duck public health laws that prevent such companies from lying to us?

So, should China take a stand and distance itself from the companies that may tarnish the Olympic ideal, both for the sake of its own Games and future ones? Or is it better to take the money now and try to provide a show so spectacular that the world will be reminded of exactly how magical the Olympic vision of a world united through sport can be?

Here are some opinions on the issue:

Chris Johnson, former advertising executive, Lowe Lintas, London and Flextech Television Promotions

Morality doesn't enter into it, this is just the way big business works. Any salesman, at whatever level, will try and make his or her products look better than the next guy's. Take P&G's orange drink Sunny Delight. Because P&G have so much power over the supermarkets and where their products go, they put Sunny Delight in the chiller cabinet next to the orange juice. Actually, (Sunny Delight) has a comparable sugar level to Coke's, but you're a parent, you see it there and you automatically think 'it's just juice.' P&G haven't said anything, and this association thing can't be regulated because even if 99 out of 100 people see, say, the Olympic rings on a product and think 'sport,' there will always be that one guy who thinks 'fish and chips,' or something. And once you start, where do you stop? Next you can't show someone relaxing in a chocolate commercial be-



Olympic rings alongsid the Golden Arches on a Macdonald's window

Photo by Photocom

Cross My Palm with Silver (and Gold and Bronze)

Just what makes hamburgers, Coke and athletics such a heady cocktail, anyway?



cause the fat in the chocolate could contribute to heart disease in 30 years' time? You might as well ban advertising altogether. Ad revenues provide money for TV, newspapers, magazines, film companies – you name it. And that's without even talking about the impact on sports.

Dermott Dever, freelance art director and portrait painter from the UK

Most people would choose a spectacular games over less sponsorship. Anyway, the association goes only so far. I believe most people are intelligent enough to know that all athletes don't eat burgers. After all, Vodafone sponsors Manchester United, but you don't assume all of its players use its phones all the time. Maybe they do, but you don't think that. They're just saying, 'We're a big telecom company. You know this because we sponsor a big football team.' Companies want to associate themselves with winning, it's that simple. Anyway, where do you draw the line? What's a bad company? Siemens and Bayer have murky histories, but in what sense can this be said to reflect the modern corporations they are today? I mean, cars pollute and some people have accidents, but are cars and car companies all bad too?

Ava Ge, graduate of Beijing University and teaching assistant

I'm more disappointed when individual Chinese sports stars associate themselves with fast food, like Li Xiaopeng (world champion gymnast for Kentucky Fried Chicken) and Yao Ming (basketball star for Macdonald's). Everyone my age knows they don't really eat it and this gives a fake impression to the children who are their fans. We know the companies don't produce healthy food but they are just doing their job trying to sell the food. It really reflects badly on the sportsmen because they're just using their sta-

tus to get even richer. It shows they don't care about their fans.

An official who requested anonymity from The Beijing Organizing Committee for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad (BOCOG)

The top 11 sponsors include companies like Visa, Macdonald's, Samsung, Lenvo, Manulife, Atos Origin SA, GE, Coca Cola, Kodak, Panasonic and Swatch. Five of them have confirmed with us that they will sponsor the 2008 Olympics in Beijing. Personally, I don't think Coca Cola does harm to anybody, as long as you don't drink too much (of it). Anything overdone is bad. I agree that athletes don't eat Macdonald's hamburgers, but it is just advertising. And I don't think any companies may be forced to downgrade their involvement from partner to sponsor by 2008 because of the rise of the litigation culture in the West. At last, I have to say that no matter what I say it cannot represent what the BOCOG has said.

Kou Jianxuan, copywriting director for Shenzhen Shangmeijia Advertising Co., Ltd., Beijing branch

The label of junk food is the biggest threat to companies like Macdonald's or Coca Cola. Once the idea is brought out, it will take lots of money and time to rebuild their image. The way they connect their brand image with the Olympics is a method of PR and advertising. I don't think most Chinese people have clear ideas about what junk food is. And, Chinese people's consuming passion is higher in sensibility than in sense. I can tell from Macdonald's advertising that this company is aiming at the younger generation. But I don't see any concerns about junk food from this advertising. How do I know Macdonald's is junk food? Well, it is fried, with lots of fat and oil. Plus, Coke takes calcium away from your body and makes your stomach sick. A parent who cares about his kid will not want to feed them that.

Zhao Fang, local gourmet, wine connoisseur and sales manager, Pacific China Aero Tech. Ltd.

I am not against the Olympics accepting Macdonald's and Coca Cola as their grand sponsors as long as they promote sport spirit. And I do not think only sporting equipment companies should be sponsors. I eat Macdonald's and I drink Coke, but very little. What if my kid likes to eat at Macdonald's? No way! The food I cook is much better than Macdonald's.

Is the Temporary Resident ID Discriminatory?

By Dong Nan

Following in the footsteps of Shenyang, capital of Northeast China's Liaoning Province last July, the capital of Central China's Hubei Province, Wuhan, announced it would also cancel its temporary resident identification system September 1.

Is Beijing next?

As an international metropolis, the Chinese capital has a large floating population, with people rushing to the city in search of better jobs and opportunities. Whether Beijing should cancel its temporary resident identification policy is becoming a hot debate.

The temporary resident identification system is a method for local governments to manage the floating population. Since 1958, people looking for work outside of their hometowns for an extended period of time had to register and apply for a temporary resident identification passbook at local police stations. The booklet, which resembles a passport, contains the resident's photograph and personal information.

The process was initially installed to help local police manage basic information on its floating population for public security, solving problems and ensuring that visitors with temporary resident identification enjoy the same rights and privileges as local people.

In Beijing, visitors above 16 years of age who plan to stay in Beijing for more than one month must apply for a temporary resident identification card with the local police station within three days of arriving in Beijing. Requirements in other cities vary mainly in terms of age of the applicant and duration of stay.

Critics of the policy in the city say it stunts the mobilization of society and discriminates against people from other regions, especially peasant workers. Proponents of the temporary resident identification system argue that it is a sound method for managing the massive floating population and should not be cancelled. Below are some points of view on the issue:

Wang Chunguang, researcher at the Institute of Sociology, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

Temporary resident identification served the planned economy where people were not able to migrate to other cities freely and residents in urban and rural areas had different social welfare systems. Now, along with the development of the market economy, temporary resident identification stunts the floating labourers and talents and the course of urbanization. (The system) is out of date and should be cancelled.

In fact, I think temporary resident identification is not as effective or important as people who support it have claimed. Chinese people have identity cards with unified serial numbers across the whole nation. It is the most effective way to show one's identity and manage people from other regions. With an identity card, you are a citizen of China and should be given the right to move freely within your own country. But temporary resident identification in various places, in fact, is a kind of distrust to identity cards. It only provides an excuse for local authorities to abuse their power and charge more money to people from other regions.

Zhou, policeman, Dongcheng District

I think it is not possible to cancel temporary resident identification in Beijing within a few days. Beijing now has a floating population of 300,000 – 400,000 without temporary resident identification: How will the police know their situation should any problems arise?

Besides, (the system) has another function – to provide statistical data on the floating population to relative departments and help them make various policies based on this information.

Now, the police are trying to popularize the second generation of identity cards for

citizens. The new (card) has a computer chip in it and can update one's information momentarily. Many believe that this can take the place of temporary resident identification. However, the popularization of the new (card) will take at least three to four years. Before this time, we should not cancel the old method.

Jilin native Zhao Yulong, middle school English teacher, who now works in Beijing

I came to Beijing in 2001 and got temporary resident identification at the time. With (the identification), I feel like a second-class citizen. It is truly unfair. The worst thing is that people who support it say that it is for "public security". I wonder why they think people from other regions intend to commit crimes? And I think those people who intend to commit crimes would not care about small things like temporary resident identification.

However, I think the most important thing is to change people's minds. Many Beijing natives I met have a superiority complex when communicating with people from other regions, although this may not be deliberate. Even my students laugh at my Dongbei accent. I think with this superiority complex, even if we cancel temporary resident identification, we cannot assure that other discriminative regulations will not come out someday.

Besides, I think the Beijing government should hear the opinions of the floating population. It is very important to hear their rights. Even though they are not Beijing natives nobody can deny that they have made a great contribution to the city.

Lu Xueyi, professor at the Institute of Sociology, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

The temporary resident registration system is a major impediment to agricultural labourers in improving their social stratum. It is not only unfair to peasants but also stunts the course of urbanization. I think the basic solution is to cancel temporary resident identification and eventually make "peasant workers" formal workers and citizens in cities.

Some people may think that if the temporary resident identification system is cancelled and peasants can migrate freely, they will rush to metropolises such as Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Shenzhen blindly. I think such worries are groundless.

For example, I once worked as a consultant for the municipal government of Shijiazhuang, capital of Hebei Province in 2000. That year, the city decided to give 300,000 peasant workers formal resident identification gradually over the next three years instead of temporary resident identification. But guess what happened? Up to 2003, less than 100,000 peasant workers accepted this arrangement and became formal Shijiazhuang citizens; others preferred to remain temporary workers and keep their freedom to come back to their hometowns and work in the fields if necessary. This fully shows that our peasants are reasonable. If there are not enough chances for employment in cities they will not rush there blindly as urban residents had imagined.

Besides, following the reforms of the resident registration system, personnel system, employment and social insurance systems, all must be improved to ensure peasant workers' interests and make them citizens of cities, otherwise, the cancellation of temporary resident identification will not have any practical effects.

Ershad Huq, editor of a news service, Dhaka, Bangladesh

There is no resident registration system in Bangladesh, permanent or temporary. As to the temporary resident identification system in Beijing, I think it is unnecessary because it's the people's basic human right to move around in their own country freely; or at least they should not be arrested simply for not having the card with them.

But, of course, nowadays, people are more concerned about terrorism and other serious problems like SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome), which will influence a lot of people. Maybe residence registration will be necessary for tracing culprits or patients with infectious diseases. But the premise to carry out this policy is to ensure people's privacy first, and, any government body should not be allowed to abuse its power in this regard.

Hwang Sung Jun, South Korean, designer at LG Electronics, China

In South Korea, people can choose where they live and work freely. This is a great benefit to the development of the economy. But China has such a large population and the difference between urban and rural areas is as big as two worlds. It's very complicated. Maybe it's expedient for the government to run such a policy. However, I think local citizens should respect people from foreign countries and other regions and treat them as kindly as possible instead of restricting their freedoms or even discriminating against them. After all, I believe that most of them do not come here to make trouble for the local people deliberately.



Peasant workers at the Beijing Railway Station

Photo by Imagechina

Heavy Burdens Plague Taxi Drivers

By Zhou Ying

"If you ask any unlicensed taxi drivers in Beijing whether they are willing to drive independently and pay taxes on time, I am sure no one will answer 'yes,'" said Liu Quanlai, an unlicensed taxi driver for five years whose application to leave his company and operate independently was refused this July.

"I drove a station wagon since 1993 for about three years and then Xiali replaced the station wagon with a taxi in Beijing, which cost 12,500 yuan," Liu told *China Youth Daily* recently, adding: "I could not afford it therefore I chose to be an unlicensed taxi driver." Liu also said that nobody wants to drive illegal taxis if they are entitled to operate independently "because we have to try our best to evade the traffic police everyday."

According to statistics from the Beijing Traffic Management Bureau, currently there are 67,000 taxis in Beijing, and 30,000 more are unlicensed.

Taxi driver Shao Changliang said that besides the lax control by the related department, there are so many drivers in violation of the law primarily due to excessive exploitation by taxi companies.

The taxi industry in brief

The government had been relaxing restrictions on entry since 1992, allowing public funds to take part in the industry. As a result, the number of taxis has rapidly increased from 16,200 to 49,000 units. The Beijing government then applied a series of shake-up policies to control the amount of taxis, such as integrating small taxi companies, cutting the service life of a car and reclaiming cars from individual taxi drivers.

In the taxi industry, there are now more than 1,000 independent taxis, which means that the cab drivers invest, operate and

benefit individually. This is an example of a typical management model that fully embodies the rules of market-oriented economy and where the workers are their own bosses: The ones who invest are the ones who benefit.

However, the remaining 66,000 taxis belong to taxi companies where the drivers have to pay a company deposit, which amounts to half of the car price. In addition, these drivers are required to pay thousands of yuan in administration costs.

Compared to the so-called "independent drivers", company drivers are paid as little as one third of what independent drivers make.

According to Liu, if an unlicensed taxi driver works for only eight hours a day, he or she can earn more than 3,000 yuan per month, but drivers working for taxi companies put in more than 15 hours per day and make less than 2,000 yuan per month.

While unlicensed taxi drivers enjoy a relatively comfortable lifestyle, hoards of company-bound cabbies say their rights and interests are being violated.

Where do the profits go?

Zhang Guangfa, a taxi driver, told *Beijing Today* that some taxi companies bought cars with the proceeds collected from drivers and still applied for bank loans in the early stages.

According to Zhang, taxi drivers had to pay 130,000 yuan in 1994 to buy a Xiali, which only cost 70,000 yuan, from the taxi company.

Since 1998, when the Beijing government began reclaiming cars to control the numbers, taxi companies purchased vehicles at very low prices and charged drivers administration costs – a practice endorsed by the government. In this way, the companies confiscated cars purchased by drivers without property rights.



Currently there are 67,000 taxis in Beijing



Taxi stop on a Beijing street

Photos by Photocom

According to Zhang, if the taxi industry continues to be dominated by companies, this will harm the drivers. He complained that administration costs are as high as 4,060 yuan per month and maintenance fees, gasoline prices and yearly examinations must be covered by the drivers themselves.

"Moreover, we dare not fall sick anymore because the company will never cut down the monthly administration costs," Zhang charged. "I have heard that one manager of a taxi company came to the hospital to collect money only two hours after a taxi driver underwent an operation."

"Administration costs are mainly why the cost of taking tax is quite high," said Dong Xin, who has been in the business for ten years. He said that if the government cancels the taxi companies and realizes an individual economy in the taxi industry, "at that time, the fare will decrease by 0.8 yuan per kilometer."

Dong believes that applications to operate the business on an individual basis will help establish a model for fair and just competition in the taxi industry, which would be a win-win situation for the "nation, the people and society."

Refusing applications

According to a report by *Beijing Today* on July 23, the Transportation Bureau did not finally approve an application by three local taxi drivers on July 12 on the grounds that the local taxi market was already saturated and strict control was needed over the number of cabs roaming Beijing streets.

The bureau had accepted the application filed by Shao Changliang, Che Dianguang and Wang Xueyong on July 1 – the first time such applications have been considered in the capital since 1994.

"There is a monopoly in the local taxi industry, which is harmful to consumers," Shao told *Beijing Today*. He explained that he and his colleagues only wanted to break away from their taxi company, which would not result in an increase in taxi cabs on the streets.

Wang Keqin, a journalist from the *China Economic Times*, conducted a half-year investigation on Beijing taxi drivers in June 2002. In the process, he interviewed over 100 taxi drivers and visited more than a dozen of their families.

Wang told *Beijing Today* that the government does not control the number of cabs in western

countries, such as New Zealand, for example: "It is just like opening a restaurant in China. Everybody is entitled to drive independently, and it is fair competition."

An officer from the Beijing Transportation Management Bureau refused to comment in fear of losing his job.

The taxi company bottleneck

According to the Beijing Traffic Management Bureau, the city will replace 67,000 taxi cabs in time for the 2008 Summer Olympic Games with 35,000 Xialis, and 25,000 Citroens will be phased out. The bureau said Beijing plans to replace about 16,000 taxis this year, with over 20,000 more units per year annually over the next few years.

Shao told *China Youth Daily* that at present both consumers and media pay great attention to the models for future use. However, the focus of the problem is whether the monopoly can be broken and whether individuals can get access to the taxi market in Beijing.

Many taxi drivers complained that after changing cab models, administration costs will climb and the deposit will surge by 50,000 yuan. They expressed fears that if the gov-

ernment would not apply a more democratic system, taxi drivers would lose their enthusiasm to work.

A sociology professor at Beijing University told *China Youth Daily* on the condition of anonymity that the main reason for switching cab models is to "enhance the quality of the drivers." However, if their average income falls below 2,000 yuan per month, the chaotic situation that plagues the industry will not improve – a key bottleneck to the recent company mode.

He said that if the government allows individuals into the market, imposing strict control over the number of cabs will not be important since some backward taxi companies are sure to be washed out in the market competition.

Wang told *Beijing Today* that he, together with some scientists from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, had recently drafted a proposal regarding a reform in Beijing's taxi industry. Wang is optimistic about the future: "We also plan to invite people from all circles, including taxi drivers, government officials and scholars from home and abroad to hold a symposium on this issue."

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By Wang Fang

September is the start of a new semester. However, some students — even those who fared well in the National College Entrance Examination — have to buy offers of admission from the university. Otherwise, they will be refused.

The first college admissions scandal was exposed by China Central Television (CCTV) August 13, 2004. It was reported that in Southwest China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, a faculty member from the Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics (Beihang) was taken into police custody for extortion involving 100,000 yuan from the parents of a student with hopes of entering the university. A series of such scandals in North China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region and Shanxi Province were exposed by CCTV, arousing much attention from the Ministry of

Buy My Offer?

Schools withhold offers before students pay out

Education and the public.

'Want your offer? Pay 100,000 yuan'

At the beginning of August,

student's parents (whose names have been withheld for security reasons) from the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region told



A CCTV still of Miao Lixin, who was asked to shell out 30,000 yuan in exchange for a university offer

CCTV that their son was accepted at Beihang University under the condition that they shell out 100,000 yuan. Otherwise, they said, the university would not process the application.

The student's father told CCTV that on July 10 he learned that his son was accepted to Bei-

hang University. However, three hours later, he received a phone call from a man who told him to pay 100,000 yuan for the offer. The stranger even threatened to return his son's documents if he did not comply.

Since his son had obtained a high score of 750 in the National College Entrance Examination, he refused to deliver the funds. He said he believed the stranger was a "swindler."

However, he was in for a shock the next morning: "My friend told me that my son's documents were sent back from the university anyway," he told CCTV. Over the next few days, the couple had received phone calls demanding they furnish the said amount.

They then turned to Gao Feng, a teacher from Beihang University who introduced them to the "link man" at Beihang University in Nanning, capital of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, who called himself Pang Hongbing.

The Beihang University website describes Pang as a professor at the university's Computer Science College. But on the Nanning government website, Pang has another identity: He is listed as the manager of the Beihang Tianhong Technology Company.

Reportedly, Pang and Gao also asked the couple to pay 100,000 yuan for the offer.

When the father finally made an oral agreement to pay the "entry" fee, the couple was notified by the enrollment hotline on July 28 that their son was accepted to Beihang. Later, they received several mobile text messages from Liu Tianping, who said he worked for the Beihang Tianhong Technology Company. They were told to deposit the money as a construction project fee.

However, Pang refused to provide the parents with receipts and insisted on getting the money before sending out the offer of admission.

On August 11, when the parents reported the incident to the police, they received a phone call from Liu, urging them to deposit the funds at an Agricultural Bank. Reportedly, he said: "If you can pay the money today, I will notify Pang immediately and he will talk to the university to send you the offer."

Liu was arrested at the bank and Pang was summoned by police. Their employee cards proved that the duo were indeed professors at Beihang University. Police also discovered that from July 10 to August 11, the Beihang Tianhong Technology Company had accepted more than 600,000 yuan from eight students.

'I don't have money to buy the offer'

Miao Lixin from Kezuohou Banner, Tongliao, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, scored 547 on her National College Entrance Examination — 54 points above the cut-off for eligibility to enroll at the Lanzhou University of Technology.

Having received no word from the university, her father called the school on July 21. Staff at the enrollment office told him that the minimum requirement was 550 points and that his daughter had to pay 30,000 yuan to make up the three marks.

With great persuasion from the institution, Miao's parents finally agreed to pay the money. On July 22, a teacher from the university called saying that Miao's documents had been delivered to the school and, as long as they remitted the money, they would receive the offer.

However, Miao's parents could not afford to pay 30,000 yuan and asked for a discount. But the university refused. Yang Jinming, the director of the enrollment office of the Lanzhou University of Technology said: "We only give Inner Mongolia 38 quotas. According to our bottom mark, she was not accepted. We had to do a lot work in order to get an extra quota for her. So she must pay the money."

Earning this, Miao decided to ask the university to return her documents so she could apply to other junior colleges. However, according to Wang Tiezhi, director of the Tongliao Education and Examination Centre,

without a more valid excuse, the Lanzhou University of Technology was not entitled to send back the documents. "I have already assigned the students who met the university's requirements," explained Wang.

Miao not only lost 30,000 yuan and the opportunity to study at the university, but also the chance to apply to other colleges. The worst outcome she can face will be to repeat her final year of high school — for the fourth time.

"Why did they refuse me?"

Wang Binbin from Taizhou, East China's Zhejiang Province, passed a test held by the Xi'an Conservatory in March 2004. In the following National College Entrance Examination, she scored 346 — 46 points above the cut-off for prospective Zhejiang Province arts students.

When she called the enrollment office of the Xi'an Conservatory on June 29, she was told, "Your scores meet our requirements but send 30,000 yuan for the education fund so we can mail you the offer."

Worried about procuring such a huge sum of money, Wang's family received a call from the enrollment office on July 8, reminding them that the conservatory was going to enroll students in Zhejiang Province on July 10 and that they must remit the payment to the school within two days. Wang replied: "If I don't have the money, what will happen to me?" To which the staff replied bluntly: "If so, we won't enroll you."

Since Wang's parents could not afford to pay the "education fund", she was refused by the conservatory.

A circular from the Ministry of Education

In regard to the college admission scandals, the Ministry of Education issued an urgent circular on August 15, strictly prohibiting anybody and any organization to charge students extra enrollment fees in exchange for an offer.

Experts speak out

In China, the current percentage of people who have received a tertiary education makes up only 5 percent of the whole population, while the average world figure stands at more than 15 percent. This implies that competition among possible university students is very intense.

Tao Dongfeng, an expert from the Capital Normal University, said it is insufficient to curb such violations by merely depending on the supervision of media and authorities. Opening information on enrollment fully to the public is the basic solution, he said, adding that higher institutions should publicize detailed explanations about why students were not enrolled.

Epilogue

Beihang University: The university has suspended the director of its enrollment office and has sent an offer of admission to the student from Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. The Beihang Tianhong Technology Company has returned its illegal earnings. Li Wei, the president of the university gave a public apology on CCTV and admitted that the incident was a grave mistake by the enrollment management. He expressed hopes that the scandal was an isolated incident.

The Lanzhou University of Technology: Miao Lixin's documents are still at the university and she has not yet received an offer of admission. She was invited to re-sit the examination.

The Xi'an Conservatory: After being exposed by CCTV Wednesday, the Ministry of Education and Shanxi Education Office instructed the Xi'an Conservatory to return the collected "education funds" and documents to the students who did not meet the enrollment requirement. The person in charge of enrollment has composed a self-criticism and was suspended from his post. However, some students have not yet received their money. As to Wang Binbin, the enrollment staff told her: "We will return the 30,000 yuan to the students who paid for the offer. Since you did not pay the money, we still cannot enroll you."

By Zhou Ying

The downpours in Southwest China's Sichuan Province and Chongqing Municipality that persisted from last Thursday to Saturday were among the heaviest in decades, affecting nearly 8 million people.

According to a Thursday report from the China News Service, at least 106 people were killed and 25 went missing in Sichuan Province by 16:30 pm Thursday, while the death toll jumped to 75 and 25 missing in Chongqing by 9 am the same day.

Disaster relief officials from the Chongqing government told the China News Service that the direct economic losses after some of the worst rainstorms in recent years in Chongqing amounted to nearly 2 billion yuan, of which agriculture suffered a near 0.5-billion-yuan deficit.

Catastrophe crept up suddenly

Chongqing's Kaixian County made headlines during China's worst-ever industrial disaster in 2003 when poisonous natural gas containing hydrogen sulphide blew out of a gas well, killing over 243 people.

The Sichuan Provincial Disaster Relief Office confirmed by 6:30 pm Tuesday that in Kaixian County alone — the hardest-hit area in Chongqing — the death toll jumped to 54, with 16 people missing and 554 injured.

All of the booths at the Dalin market, which is located near a river, were inundated. After the flood, peddlers were busy cleaning their shop fronts and eliminating the debris left in the market area. Some stores and agricultural markets were also opened.

One peddler, Chen Daizheng, told the *West China City Daily* Tuesday that he rushed to the market immediately to salvage his commodities when he heard the flood warning Saturday night.

"It was not until I finished my work that I saw the floodwater lance into the market from all entrances, and the market became a vast expanse of water instantly," he said.

Lei Yourong, manager of the Kaizhou medicine store, told Xinhua Net that her store has been open since Monday night. "Although I have lost a great number of medicine, I have not lost heart," she said, adding: I believe that everything can be resumed."

Showers over the past two days have posed a great challenge to rescue workers, especially in the mountainous areas, which were hit by landslides and where roads were mostly destroyed. In Dazhou city of Sichuan Province, for example, more than 6,000 people are still stranded in their flood-besieged homes.

Fu Meirong, a local resident of Bajiao village in Dazhou city, said he will never forget Saturday night when he witnessed his family members — including his mother, wife, nephew and niece — perish in the flash



Dazhou locals await fresh drinking water, Sichuan Province

Photo by Photocom

Catastrophe hits Southwest China



Locals help transport people to safety in Dazhou city, Sichuan Province

floods.

Fu left his home at about 5:00 am on Sunday to work when he heard a loud noise from one kilometer away: "I saw torrents of water rushing down the mountain where our home is and some wood, furniture and livestock were floating in the floodwater," he told *West China City Daily*.

As Fu rushed back home, he noticed his mother floating on the water. "With the help of my neighbors, I tried to save her, but she will never open her eyes again," Fu said.

In shock, Fu searched for the remains of his other family members. With the help of his fellow villagers, Fu recovered his two sons and a female neighbor who were rushed to hospital. However, Fu's father, wife, nephew and niece are still missing.

Flood fighters

More than 5,000 armed police have taken part in the rescue

work. Zhang Jun, a 19-year-old police officer, drowned while helping villagers evacuate their flood-besieged homes in Chongqing.

"He died a tragic death. I really deeply regretted calling the fire brigade at the moment," said a weeping local woman on Sunday, as the head official of the fire brigade consoled her.

She told Xinhua Net that the flood rose very suddenly to the second floor of the building. Young people ran away quickly, she said, leaving some children, women and elderly people behind, who gathered on the balcony. "We were really in a dangerous situation at that time," she recalled.

The woman then called 119 for help and firefighters arrived at the scene immediately. "They spared no efforts to help us and they refused to rest even when their legs cramped up."

Blame it on Modena

By Gareth George

I'm no connoisseur, but there's something about sitting here – the fresh, light wine, veined timber ceilings, red-and-white-checked tablecloths, homemade bread and cold cuts. Where is this, you ask? – Germany? Southern France maybe? – Italy? You're getting warmer. Actually, it's just two minutes away from Beijing Capital Airport.

"We're thinking of moving," says Claudio Bonfatti, who set up the Agrilandia agro-tourist farm with his wife, Lu, in 1999. "The airport's expanding," he adds, motioning the descending aircraft overhead.

I know what he means: Those hands are working hands. And, in this case, they're perhaps more expressive than explanatory. They are the hands of someone who "does," not someone who "talks" about things. And, all around us is a monument to this philosophy. "But I'm the dreamer," Bonfatti cuts in, "My wife is the one who realizes them."

Bonfatti and Lu imported 8,000 fruit trees from Italy. Now, there are 100,000 of them, and the couple is constantly proposing and introducing new varieties of plants. Where else can you get organic artichokes in Beijing?

"All the profits have gone back into the venture," he explains. "We worked in the fields ourselves and, sometimes, we even struggled to pay the workers. But this meant we could keep the farm moving forward."

Agrilandia produces fruits, vegetables, delicatessen, pickles, marmalades, wines and spirits, all made from classic ingredients in the old traditional Italian method. Behind the main farmhouse, with its cylindrical brick chimney, are hefty jars of vegetables pickling in wine vinegar on a windowsill – a testament to the homestyle values Bonfatti espouses.

All of the produce at the farmhouse is for sale, or Bonfatti and his wife can cook for you at one of the many restaurants onsite. With its abundant vegetation, the farm is all about rustic simplicity, while remaining efficient enough to cater to the modern client.

The couple arrived in China purely by chance. Bonfatti says he never saw China as a new land of opportunity for the foreign businessman. He and his wife came as two individuals with a dream of a certain way of life. It was a new challenge, Bonfatti recalls as he shows me a photograph of a lake at sunrise; a captured moment.

"I used to live in Milan," he says, tapping the photo. "Everyone was rushing. This is China. This is my private tranquility. I think people in Beijing feel the same way. They want somewhere simple; easy." He sits back: "To me, there is a beauty in watching my trees, my fruit grow."

In 1995, a friend asked Bonfatti, who is fluent in English, to help him launch a food production plant. "I had to sort out a passport – everything," recalls Bonfatti. "And he told me I'd be away one, maybe two weeks." But something had changed in Bonfatti, or, more precisely, Bonfatti saw something in China. Today, it's difficult to imagine him as anything other than the affable, warm-humoured host that he is.

In 1998, Bonfatti opened his first restaurant, "Peter Pan" in Sanlitun, near the German Embassy. He has been a restaurateur for nearly 30 years and China gave him the chance to bring his hometown cuisine to the world.

Bonfatti comes from Modena in mid-northern Italy, a town famous for Parmesan cheese, air-dried ham, salami, lasagna and tortellini. "Because the climate (in Beijing) is very similar to Modena – dry and warm, except for the



Claudio Bonfatti whips up something sweet.

"This is my private tranquility. I think people in Beijing feel the same way. They want somewhere simple; easy."



Restaurateur Claudio Bonfatti with wife Lu and daughters

Photos by Tian Xiaotong

Monsoon times – we thought we could grow our own produce." But he adds pensively: "This has been a wet summer, so we have no grape harvest this year. And, so, no wine next year." Having sampled the house red, I can understand his disappointment. "There are not many pigs around at the moment too because we butchered them for salami," he adds. However, in the long term, Bonfatti plans to produce all the food they sell onsite – even the cheese – in a year or so.

Bonfatti is a family man and it was never his intention to cut himself off in his new business: "I never wanted to be the only one. I wanted to share this place with others. So, we opened to the public. People come here and say 'What can we do?' I tell them 'Your boss isn't here – just do nothing!' This is strange to them," he continues. "It takes them a while to understand. But, at the end, it's the target of everyone to enjoy their lives. I've

been very lucky; since my parents died I've had two big angels looking down on me."

While Bonfatti's two lives – in the East and West – may have given him this unique perspective, for guests who find it difficult to "just do nothing" there are plenty of other ways to enjoy a lazy afternoon. There is fishing, swimming, beach volleyball, table tennis, badminton, horseback riding, or just strolling through the lush orchards.

Although Claudio leaves the face-to-face dealings to Lu – "I'm too direct. She's the diplomat!" he says – they needed very little capital to start up the business. Since the couple hired local workers, the farm has created a source of locally produced organic foods and a steady supply of work for local labourers. The duo were very "hands on" from the start, involved in every stage of the process. For them, the venture was never about money; it was a labour of love.

Initially, 80-90 percent of the farm's clientele consisted of foreigners; later, largely via word of mouth, more and more Chinese came around. Bonfatti now puts the figures at around 50-50. "I think they became curious about us," he says, "They hear we do special products and perhaps they know the Italian stereotype. They want to come and see."

But there's nothing stereotypical about Bonfatti's wife. Sharp and bubbly, yet welcoming and ladylike, Lu is quick to apologize for making us wait a few minutes. "I lived with Claudio in Italy and saw the agriculture, it was very beautiful," she recalls. Although Lu comes from a business background, she fell in love with the rural lifestyle. Having previously run a couple of businesses, Lu was keen to have an owner's control in something she believed in. She is passionate about Agrilandia. "I thought we could have this life in China and also work at the same time."

Her husband agrees: "What was important was that I could pluck the fruit from the trees and eat

it there and then. That's what we do in Modena; we don't have to wash everything." This philosophy extends to every area of the farm. Bonfatti's livestock has space to roam; his pigs have mud to roll around in. The animals feed on the fruit and vegetables from the farm and grow up healthy since their food is grown organically.

In terms of pesticides, Bonfatti believes in prevention rather than cures. Just as in Modena, he uses a simple copper-sulphur-calcium-based product to disinfect and protect his plants that adhere to strict European specifications for organically grown produce. Bonfatti's adopts an even more hard-line attitude towards herbicides: "I won't use them," he says simply. "They get into the soil and damage it. Then you have a vicious cycle, with all the plants grown in the soil being polluted. We hire people to weed the herbs by hand. It's the only way."

Lu goes even further. Although she has lived in the city most of her life, she was born in the countryside and finds it painful to contemplate the damage caused by chemical pesticides. "We've set ourselves a big target," she smiles proudly: "We're setting a good example to the farmers around us and we're living a good life. It's hard work but it just feels good."

Perhaps the Italian way of life is not so different from the Chinese way. There's something fundamentally compatible about their mutual emphasis on family and healthy living. And Agrilandia proves this to be the case.

Upon our arrival at the farm, Bonfatti and Lu were in the middle of a staff meeting, which looked more like a family gathering. The couple's children ran around gaily, playing with puppies and laughing with the guests. All this will be their legacy – the best elements from two cultures. Even during the interview, Bonfatti was taking phone calls. It's easy to forget they work 24 hours a day.

"Of course it's a business," Lu tells me, "But you have to be very lucky to work, to live like this" She smiles and, of course, there's a little Italian in her gesture. Bonfatti nods approvingly: "Anyway, my eldest daughter has a baby now. I want her to be able to eat the fruit from the trees without getting sick." He points towards the orchard, past the children's playground; past the rabbit hutches; past the washing drying on the clothesline; past the barbecue and the workers planting strawberries. I don't think he has anything to worry about.

For more information on Agrilandia, Peter Pan Italian Restaurant, or to book a reservation visit www.agrilandia.com.cn or e-mail Claudio at info@agrilandia.com.cn.

A Flavour of Italy

By Gareth George

Sitting down to dinner, Claudio Bonfatti convinced me to try the pesto – homegrown and homemade, naturally. We chose the set menu largely because the à la carte was comprehensive and everything sounded so good, but also because I didn't trust myself to order just one or two dishes without my eyes wandering to my neighbor's plate.

We began with a lightly chilled bottle of the house red. Fresh and young tasting, I forced myself to examine the main farmhouse, rather than what other diners were eating. The decor was as sparse as it was warm and homely. An instantly relaxing environment, despite the sturdy wooden benches, and all the traditional symbols of European country life were in place – from the red-and-white-checked tablecloths, to the buxom brick chimney that served as a centrepiece in the room.

The dishes came promptly (thank God!). First, sweet, oily antipasti and home-baked bread with salami and garlic sausage, where the meat was rich but not overpowering. The conveyor belt of delicacies continued with pizza – a golden, crisp, bubbly dough – and generous lily pads of cured meat that sunk into the cheese.

I was particularly excited about the next course: A large plate of spaghetti with three bowls of sauce. The first, a coarse and meaty bolognese; the second, a slippery, glowing homegrown tomato; and, of course, the signature pesto. The tomato and the pesto in particular were a vision of fresh, primary colours, and the flavours were correspondingly explosive.

There was a lightness to the dishes that is unusual in Italian cooking: We never felt overwhelmed although there was too much to eat in one sitting. (I confess to taking most of the next course – a huge pork barbecue – home with me, but even the following day, the dense, chunky sausages and ribs thick with meat retained their delicious smoky flavour.)

The traditional Italian salad with olive oil was light and clean, and we just about squeezed in some fresh fruit from the orchard before the coffee arrived.

There was a gentle, rustic elegance to the simple, homestyle food, but the real selling point was the experience. The smells, colours and flavours were unmistakably distinct, unmistakably fresh. It gave us the curious feeling of being five pounds heavier, yet healthier than when we had walked in.

I really had the sense that I was dining with my family. When Bonfatti's little daughters started chatting with the people at the next table, I assumed they were friends of the family's. But, as the couple prepared to leave, the gentleman asked me if the wine was made from Agrilandia grapes.

The staff deserves a special mention, as well. They were so unobtrusive that it would have been easy to miss them; but they were also extremely efficient, always on hand when we needed them and spoke excellent English.

I'm looking forward to going back. Next time, I'll set my sights on the artichoke pizza, although I can't guarantee that I won't be asking the waitress what they're having at the next table.



Owner of Agrilandia Claudio Bonfatti poses near farm machinery



The first meeting between Baoyu and Daiyu (Chapter 3)



Xiangyun is a drunken slumber among peonies (Chapter 62)

Picture Album Illustrates a Classic Tale

By Peng Juan

An exhibition of an album of illustrations for *A Dream of Red Mansions*, which has been locked away for almost 50 years, is currently on show at Beijing's National Museum.

The album features 230 plates, painted by Sun Wen during the late Qing Dynasty between 1867 and 1903. It is the largest known collection of paintings based on the classic novel and an important resource for research on this great literary work, as well as on the history of Chinese painting.

The exhibition coincides with the 240th anniversary of the death of Cao Xueqin, the author of *A Dream of Red Mansions*.

The 230-picture album consists of 24 volumes with creamy yellow covers. Except for one volume, which is blank, they each contain 10 pictures, each 43.3 centimeters long and 76.5 centimeters wide. Mounted on blue glossy damask, the pictures are well preserved, and retain their vivid original colors.

The most striking feature of the album is the panorama of the grand garden,

containing all the scenes of the novel's famous garden. From the second page, each plate vividly and explicitly illustrates a scene from *A Dream of Red Mansions*, chapter by chapter, such as *Daiyu Enters the Jia Family*, *The First Meeting Between Baoyu and Daiyu* and *Grandma Liu Strolls in the Grand Garden*.

The album devotes 154 illustrations to the book's first 80 chapters, and 76 illustrations to the remaining 40. Chapter 17 has the most illustrations - 16 in total - showing the beautiful and elegant grand garden from different angles.

The 230 illustrations feature virtually all the major subjects of traditional Chinese painting; landscape and figures, pavilions and towers, birds and animals, and apparitions and immortals.

There are over 3,700 figures represented in the album, showing realistic facial expressions and features. The young women, with their crescent eyebrows, thin eyes, rosebud mouths, sylph-like figures, long necks and fragile shoulders, are the epitome of the classic

ideal of slender, gentle, and delicate young ladies. Their fineries and flowers are not only exquisitely painted, but also dyed with golden paint, beautifully highlighting the detail. The rocks and hills in and around the lake are painted in a mineral green or ochre that creates a harmonious contrast with the warm colors of the fineries and flowers.

The artist was obviously familiar with every detail and theme of the novel. The mountains, stones and trees are painted like apparitions, as if covetously eyeing the childlike women, which reflects the idea that the Grand Garden of *A Dream of Red Mansions* is not a paradise, but rather is full of crises and traps.

Although the entire album is evidence of the highest level of artistry, very little is known about the artist. According to some experts, the illustrations, with their features of folk paintings, must be the work of an outstanding folk artist. Research indicates that the work was completed over a period of 20 years or so, equaling the time Cao Xueqin spent on

writing *A Dream of Red Mansions* some 100 years earlier.

The only written record in the album giving a clue to the artist's identity is an inscription on one illustration that reads, "73-year-old Run Zhai, Sun Wen" with the seals of Sun Wen and Sun Xiaozhou, neither of which names are mentioned in the painting's history or chronography. Research indicates that Sun Wen was born in Fengrun in North China's Hebei Province and the pictures were painted between 1867 and 1903. The whole album was mainly conceived and drawn by Sun Wen with the assistance of Sun Xiaozhou.

There are few records detailing the history of ownership of the album, except that it was transferred to the Lüshun Museum in Dalian, Liaoning Province, in July 1959 by the Shanghai Institute for Conservation of Cultural Relics. Since then, it remained sealed until its rediscovery in the 1970s, although little attention was paid to it at that time.

Experts at the museum say the album was collected as a first-

class national cultural relic. According to Liu Guangtang, curator of the Lüshun Museum, who has engaged in research on the album for over 10 years, the first 80 chapters of *A Dream of Red Mansions* were written by Cao Xunqin and the remaining 40 chapters are attributed to Gao E, who published the combined version in 1792. The illustrations that correspond to the two sections are similarly different, with an abrupt change in style between the 80th and 81st chapter.

Being Sun Wen's only known work makes the album all the more precious.

A Dream of Red Mansions is regarded as one of the four classics of Chinese literature. Therefore, from the mid-18th century, a great many artworks have adopted it as a theme, including New Year pictures, prints, picture books and embroideries. The hand-painted album by Sun Wen is a rarity among such artworks, because of its enormous scale and high level of artistry.

It is also an artwork that very few people yet know about. Even renowned experts and scholars, including Zhou

Ruchang and Feng Qiyong, both regarded as leading authorities on *A Dream of Red Mansions*, have not had a chance to view the original hand-painted album. Feng Qiyong, who had only seen photos of the plates, said that from an aesthetic point of view, the album has exceptional value.

Researchers at the National Museum noted that the artworks have a high artistic value because they were created in accordance with the scenarios, the figures and the architectural characteristics described in the original novel, which provides rare evidence into research on the novel.

Liu Guangtang regards the difference in the style of illustrations for the first 80 and final 40 chapters as an intentional device by the artist.

But why one of the volumes is blank remains a mystery. Following the original chapters of the novel, the album should have 240 pages or 240 pictures, but now only 230 pages remain. What happened to the missing 10 pages and what they may have contained is a mystery.

Why China? An Australian Friend

By Annie Wei

How C.P. Fitzgerald came to know so much about pre-liberation China, the tangle of warfare, the warlords, the last emperor, and the lives of the masses who lived amid the turmoil, is easily understood on reading *Why China?* This meticulously constructed autobiographical account of his travels and life in China covers a period of almost thirty years, from 1923 to 1950, from the big cities along the east coast to remote and desolate areas.

The Chinese edition of *Why China?*, released by Shandong Pictorial Publishing House, is one of three recommended books introduced by the Australia Council for the Arts, along with *Of a Boy* by Sonya Hartnett and *The Philosopher's Dog*, by Raimond Gaita.

Written in a frank, forthright style, *Why China?* on a basic level relates the author's primary intention in visiting China, and what he did and saw during the time he was here.

It is also a believable personal story, which reflects the society of China at that time: the leased territory in Shanghai where most of the foreign residents were indifferent to what was happening around them, the real life situation of local Chinese people, the way in which *guanxi* (family connections) affected the running of the railway system, for which Fitzgerald first worked when he arrived in China as a warehouse manager's assistant; and the never-ending struggle for power between rival warlords.

There is also an abundance of fascinating trivia, such as how an American company he once worked for violated the anti-trust law, and how the last Qing emperor was cheated into buying cheap European furniture.

Unlike many other foreigners in China at the time, Fitzgerald was critical of other foreigners for their inability to appreciate the significance of China to the rest of the world.

The longer he stayed in China, the stronger Fitzgerald's feelings became for the Chinese people and culture, and his deep affection for the country and its people is evident throughout the book.



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What's on DVD

By Wang Yue



Three Colours

Krzysztof Kieslowski's *Three Colours* trilogy, which explores the French Revolutionary ideals of Freedom, Equality and Brotherhood, is a landmark of world cinema. As all three parts won several nominations in many film festival, it is a required course for all film lovers. Special features include an interview with the director, a discussion of the main characters and a selection of the director's early works. Mandarin and French soundtracks with English and Chinese subtitles. DVD9



Hellboy

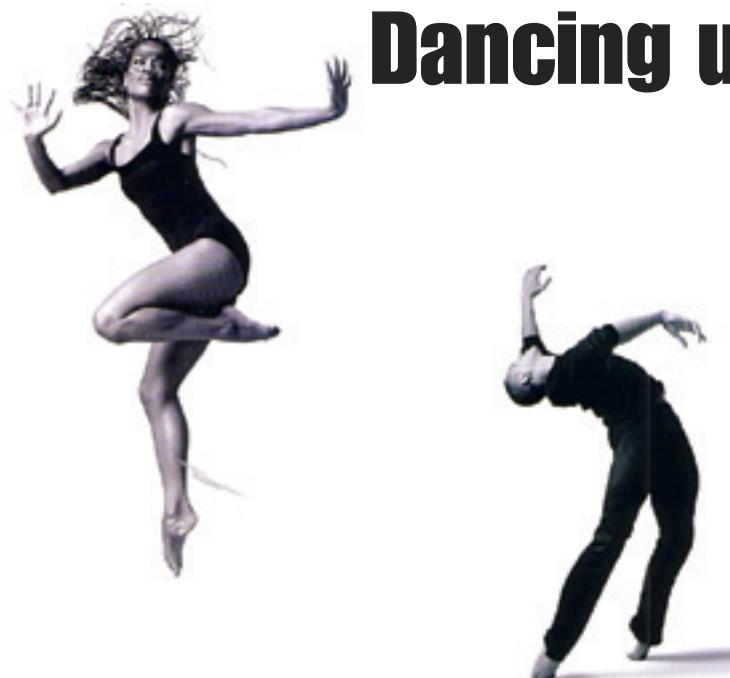
One of the most popular Hollywood movies of this summer vacation, *Hellboy* is about a strange looking, and strange, boy, who is adopted by a kindly professor. *Hellboy*, it transpires, is endowed with supernatural powers, and must make a decision as to follow the path of justice and goodness, or join ... the Dark Side...! Special features include several short cartoons. English with English, Chinese, French, Korean and Thai subtitles. DVD 5



Immortal

Directed by one of the most famous cartoonist in Europe, Enki Bilal, this is a story about the gods of ancient Egypt and a mysterious young woman with blue hair and blue tears who has a secret power. Special features include photo gallery and trailers. English with English and Chinese subtitles. DVD5

Dancing up a Storm



By Yu Shanshan

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre, the renowned American dance company will present masterpieces from their repertoire in Beijing this National Day holiday. It will be the second time for the group to visit China – their first was 19 years ago.

Founded by dancer and choreographer Alvin Ailey in 1958 with a mission to honor the

uniqueness of the African-American cultural experience and the presentation and enrichment of American modern dance. During his lifetime, Ailey created 79 ballets, but his company, combining classical ballet with black American, Indian folk and modern dance, is not exclusively a repository for his own work. It also includes new works by both established and emerg-

ing choreographers.

In this upcoming show in Beijing, the company will perform classic pieces like *Revelation*, which explores the spirituality of African-Americans in the South, *Winter in Lisbon*, choreographed in 1992 by Billy Wilson, which pays tribute to consummate jazz musician Dizzy Gillespie, and *Following The Subtle Current Upstream*, a 20-minute ballet accompanied by an original score by Zakir Hussain, Miguel Frasconi and Miriam Makeba.

The group will also give performances in Shanghai, Hong Kong and Singapore during its tour around Asia.

October 1 program:
Winter in Lisbon
Following The Subtle Current Upstream
Revelations
October 2 program:
Night Creature
Cry
Episodes
Revelations

Where: Poly Theatre When: October 1, 2 Ticket: 180-1,500 yuan Tel: 6551 8181



Backstreet Boys are Heading Your Way

By Jacqueline Yu

The Backstreet Boys are playing in Beijing this month, joining the ranks of an illustrious who's who of celebrities who have visited recently, including Engelbert Humperdinck, Richard Clayderman and Deep Purple. The US boy band are going

all out to reinvigorate their fading careers with a comeback world tour and a brand new album. Beijing is their first stop.

The five band members, AJ McLean, Howie Dorough, Nick Carter, Kevin Richardson, and Brian Littrell, met in 1993, and although they are now widely considered to epitomize American culture, they first shot to fame in Europe before catching on at home. Their smooth harmonies and acappella style created a whirlwind of hysteria in the late 1990s and 2000.

Their hits include up-tempo classics like Backstreet's *Back* and *The One*, soft, sensitive ballads like *As Long As You Love Me*, *Shape of My Heart*, and the ambiguously longing *I Want It That Way*.

Their Beijing concert will be a fanfare of interactive events, with dancers, smoke, mirrors and lights of every color of the rainbow, not to mention the Backstreet Girls, who will faithfully mimic the Boys' every pout and pelvic undulation.

Where: National Olympics Center When: 7:30 pm, September 24 Ticket: 200-1,200 Tel: 8447 7308

The Secret's Out

By Jacqueline Yu

Another band will also welcome their tenth anniversary in Beijing – Secret Garden, the instrumental group from Northern Europe, will make their second visit to this city since 1999.

The two band members Chinese fans are most familiar with are Norwegian composer, producer and keyboard player Rolf Lovland and Irish violinist Fionnuala Sherry.

Their first album, recorded in 1994, combines new-age with a flavor of Norwegian traditional



folk music, Celtic ballads and an essence of classical music. The spirituality of their music has hit a chord with lovers of ambient music all around the world.

In their second China show, the Beijing audience may experience a Chinese flavor in Secret Garden's music, when they use the Chinese flute and Bawu. The duo are also expected to be joined by an *Erhu* player or the renowned dancer Yang Liping.

Where: Beijing Exhibition Hall Theater (Beizhan Theatre) When: 7:30 pm, September 30, October 1, 2 Tickets: 180-880 yuan Tel: 8447 7308

WORLDWIDE

Tarantino's B-Movie Favorites on Show at Venice

Quentin Tarantino is in town to present a retrospective of Italian films, but don't look for masterpieces from the likes of Federico Fellini or Luchino Visconti in the line-up.



Quentin Tarantino

Instead, *Cannibal Holocaust*, *Orgasm* and *The Big Gundown* take the honors as some 20 action flicks, erotica and horror B-movies unspool in the new "Italian Kings of the Bs" section of the Venice Film Festival.

"To actually see them all in Italian, restored and in their original form, it's a movie geek dream," Tarantino gushed at a news conference. Indeed, many of them inspired the films like *Pulp Fiction* and *Kill Bill* that have given Tarantino a cult following and idol status in the cinematic world. "I put what I took from some of these movies into practical application," he said, pointing to the influence of spaghetti westerns and Italy's 1970s cop movies on *Kill Bill: Vol. 2*.

(Reuters)

British Fashion Contest Has Grand Designs



Britain produces some of the world's top fashion designers – Stella McCartney and Alexander McQueen among them – but many of the best fly off for Paris, New York or Milan as soon as their star has risen.

Fearing London may lose its place among the world's fashion capitals if its home-grown stars continue to nourish their talents and display their collections elsewhere, one fashion writer decided to take action.

"Fashion Fringe," the brainchild of writer Colin McDowell, is a talent contest loosely based on the "Pop Idol" format that aims to find Britain's next fashion star – and keep the winner at home with 100,000 pounds (\$179,300) to help build a viable business.

The contest's American cousin, a reality TV competition to be hosted by legend-

ary designer Tommy Hilfiger and tentatively titled *The Cut*, will force contestants to live together, then dump one from the group each week.

(Reuters)

Anita Baker Releases New Collection of Songs



Anita Baker

Anita Baker is back in the limelight with a sultry new collection of songs and a second bite of the apple. The Grammy Award winning singer, whose hits include *Sweet Love* and *Giving You the Best That I Got*, has a new single, *You're My Everything*, that is already a hit on urban adult contemporary stations.

Baker, who wrote or cowrote nine of the album's 10 tracks, stopped making music in the mid-1990s when her parents fell ill, she had her first son and she felt she wasn't spending enough time with her husband. "Living life is about wearing all our hats – the mommy hat, the daughter hat, the wife hat, the career woman hat," she said. "And I was trying to do so many things." Her new album hits stores this week.

(AP)

Rodney Dangerfield to Make Full Recovery

Comedian Rodney Dangerfield is expected to make a full recovery from his heart valve replacement surgery but remained in intensive care Sunday, his publicist said.

The 82-year-old actor is hospitalized at the University of California,



Rodney Dangerfield

Los Angeles Medical Center, where he continues to make progress, said publicist Kevin Sasaki. He underwent surgery August. 25.

The comic underwent brain surgery last year to reduce his chances of having a stroke during the heart surgery. Dangerfield, best known for the self-mocking line, "I don't get no respect," recently released his autobiography, *It's Not Easy Being Me: A Lifetime of No Respect but Plenty of Sex and Drugs*. Before his surgery, he also taped several appearance on upcoming television shows.

(AP)

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加裕华装饰

By Xie Lixue

“Women hold up half the skies,” said Mao Zedong decades ago, ushering in a new era for female employment in this country. Today, women have become key employees in top companies and many have risen to unprecedented heights in their fields, proving they are just as skilled, intelligent and qualified as their male colleagues.

A group of such extraordinary women gathered last Friday at the IBM China Female Leadership workshop in Beijing to discuss strategies and factors for women's success on the job and in life.

Breaking down barriers:

In China, like nearly all the rest of the world, most work outside the home was done by men until the last hundred years or so. The residual influence of that tradition has created invisible but very tangible barriers that continue to block many women's progress in the workplace.

“My last job was in Japan. The sales director said he felt uncomfortable that a woman was going to be his boss. So he told me he considered our relationship like an arranged marriage,” Ying Chu, vice president for strategic support initiatives at IBM's Greater China Group (GCG) said.

“So I told him we could divorce, but we needed to work together for our child – the company's business. In the end, we worked things out.”

Robbin Suess, Asia Pacific vice president for human resources at IBM, suggested

Superwomen Speak about Success



Photos by Xie Lixue



Yang Lan



Robbin Suess



Bi Shumin

career women focus on establishing emotional connections with clients and employers, paying attention to their needs and ideas and letting supervisors know what they have accomplished.

Self determination:

Women that shoot for suc-

cess can face many obstacles, not all external.

The writer Bi Shumin suggested true acceptance of oneself and cultivating a healthy self image were important to getting ahead in this world.

But those principles go far more than skin deep.

“When our minds find the harmony to accept our flawed bodies, we can accept others who are as imperfect as we are,” Bi said.

Qualities other speakers mentioned as keys to success included patience, tenacity, determination, strong values and communication skills, creativity, a sense of adventure and readiness to share.

Balancing work and life:

Reaching the right balance between career and family life is an absolute must for women to find happiness, several speakers said, but equations have to be constantly adjusted.

Janet Ang, vice president for the personal systems group at

IBM GCG, recalled, “I worked 10 years before I got married.

“I had a tight schedule. I would meet my boyfriend at 6 pm, go home to sleep at 9:30 pm and then get up at 3 or 4 in the morning to go to work.”

But her career drive took a bit of a dive when her boyfriend proposed marriage, she said.

“Before he proposed, my boss hinted I might get a promotion. After we were engaged, I happily ran to my manager and told him not to promote me because I was going to get married.”

Personally defining success:

Of course, everyone has to find their own balance on the road to true life happiness.

Yang Lan, chairwoman of Sun Media Group, said her three-year old son once asked why she loved her job so much.

“I said I thought it was interesting to make programs that would be seen by thousands of people.

“He said, ‘It's interesting just because thousands of people are watching?’”

Yang said the innocent response caused her to pause and assess her values.

“I asked myself if being in a position where many people could see me was worth the pain of being separated from my children.

I decided the real value of the job was that I could find many great, inspiring stories and pass them on to others.”

Corporate HR:

By Xie Lixue

On September 1, Huang Huajing, human resources manager at insurance firm Sino-US Metlife, talked to *Beijing Today* about her company's internal culture and recruiting secrets.

Beijing Today: Please describe Metlife's company culture.

Huang: We focus on a performance-based culture, with emphasis on individual, team and company performance. Meanwhile, we highlight the value of teamwork and strive to create a family-like working environment.

In addition, we highly value individual honesty and credibility, which are of top priorities in the insurance business. That also explains why we chose Snoopy as our corporate mascot: he is trustworthy, friendly and funny.

BT: Do you provide internships to young people and recruit openly?

Honesty Is Best Policy at Metlife



Huang Huajing

Huang: Yes, we have summer internship programs for university students around the world. On average, we introduce 10 students each year to our office in Beijing. This summer, we selected eight students from around the world, most of whom are enrolled at top universities. These stu-

dents have good chances of joining MetLife after graduation.

Through the program, students can be exposed to many experiences in corporate business and the company benefits from fostering these potential human resources.

BT: What kind of applicants do you prefer when recruiting?

Huang: Besides what they write on their resumes, we focus on applicants' morality and integrity.

Secondly, we prefer candidates who are able to learn quickly, a must in this fast changing and highly competitive market.

Thirdly, applicants have to be committed to their careers.

BT: Please describe the training offered employees.

Huang: For newcomers, we have systematic orientation

programs in which we introduce our company values, operations, strategies, policies and procedures.

After that, we provide training courses on the insurance business during employees' probationary periods to give them more professional know-how.

We also offer targeted training for senior staff tailored to their needs and based on their training assessment results.

BT: How do you personally feel about working at Metlife?

Huang: I have worked here for nearly two years.

Because it is a young company, Sino-US MetLife provides a big stage for all employees to contribute and to grow and I have personally learned and benefited a lot from the overall process of the company's development. It has been a challenging and rewarding experience.

I think about Metlife as being just like a big family in which everyone shares their experiences and knowledge and the resources are available to achieve personal and corporate goals.

A Beijing-based English newspaper is looking for reporters, freelancers and editors. Chinese applicants should have university degrees in English or related majors and media experience. Foreigners from the UK and US with relevant media experience preferred. Please send resumes and writing samples to: hr@ynet.com.

北京青年报 BEIJING TODAY 今日北京

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"I believe everyone will meet trials and tribulations as they grow up, and we should treat such troubles as valuable treasures in the process of learning to live" — Tang Zibo
Photo by Sun Ming

Road of Discovery

New book traces experiences of a young Chinese student abroad

By Sun Ming/Zhou Ying

"Only you can make yourself truly happy." This old adage is familiar to most people, but turning it into reality can take a lifetime. A select few, however, manage to learn the wisdom of this phrase at a young age.

Beijing native Tang Zibo is such a person. June marked the publication of the 21-year-old's first book, *Study Abroad at 13*, in which he recalls the pleasures and pains of his eight years studying in England.

"I hope my book can be an inspiration to many readers, especially those who are studying, or planning to study, in far-flung foreign lands," Tang said in an interview with *Beijing Today*.

Loneliness was a constant issue during Tang's initial years in the UK. He was stricken by homesickness, a feeling of not belonging and the deeper struggle to find his place in life and a sense of self worth.

"Tang had been through all this often without the support of family or close friends," Stephen Hallet, Tang's guardian in England, writes in the preface to the book.

"Over time he learnt to adapt to the new challenges of life in England... He has learnt to overcome loneliness through a growing confidence in his own identity."

Painful start

Tang embarked on his England adventure in September 1996, hoping one day to emerge as an outstanding man. "My ambition was strong enough that at first I all but forgot my sadness about leaving my parents, relatives and close friends," he writes.

He spent the first few days of his new life at Hallett's home in north London, facing all the foreign sights with a mixture of worldliness and naivety.

After a few short days of adjustment, Tang headed to a school in North Hampton to begin his studies. It was a disappointing experience.

His shared a small, sparsely furnished dormitory room with his roommate Nick, one of many Hong Kong kids at the school.



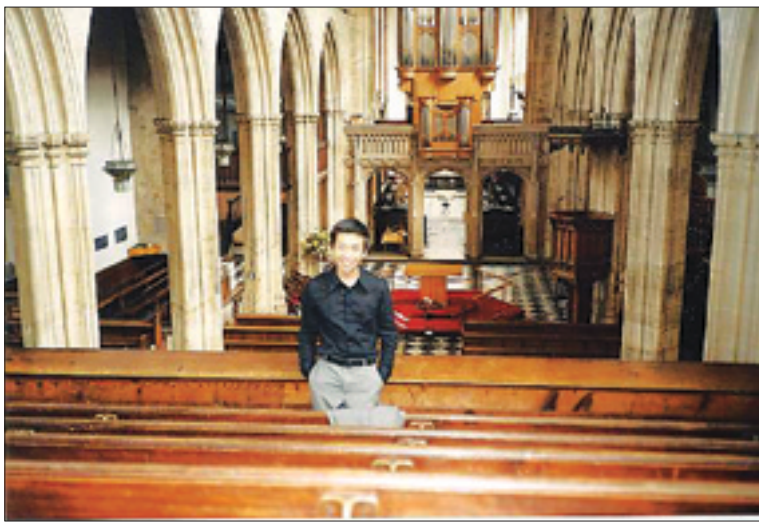
Study Abroad at 13 was published in June.

Language proved to be a major hurdle. "At first, I could hardly understand anything the teachers said except for in the art courses," he recalled.

Though depressed by his study struggles, Tang was resolute on never giving up. He set his mind on catching up with his classmates and improving his English, so he stopped speaking Chinese.

"At that time, I had to check the dictionary, word by word, in order to understand my text books. It was really a difficult time," he said.

Loneliness was no less troublesome, as Nick often went out at nights with his friends, leaving Tang alone in the room with his books. At times like that, tears for parents and friends in Beijing were impossible to hold back.



In a church in Oxford



Tang left China in 1996 at the age of 13.



Tang recently studied and worked at the Oxford Business College. Here he hits the town with his boss, Stan Hunter (right), and a colleague.



Playing guitar in his dorm room
Photos provided by Tang

The first semester passed and Tang got through the exams with good marks. He attributes his rapid progress not only to his own hard work, but also to the influence of his only friend at the school, Garry Ho from Malaysia. They got to know each other during a lonely winter stretch in which they were the only students around after their classmates all headed home for the holidays.

"Actually, I could also have flown back to China, but I was afraid that if I did I would forget my English," Tang explained. He was surprised to find Garry, a student two years his senior, also prowling the otherwise empty dorm and was impressed by his good English.

"He treated my like his little brother and with Garry's help, I made great progress in English and my other classes," Tang said.

He wrote in his diary, "It was my first Christmas. There may have been no Christmas tree, roasted turkey or pumpkin pie, but I got the most important and valuable Christmas present there, a real friendship."

Learning to work

After a year in North Hampton, Tang decided to transfer to Concord College in Shrewsbury, Wales to continue his A-level courses.

Some time later, Tang happened to notice a sign in a restaurant window advertising a job opening for a bus boy. Out of sheer curiosity, he decided to give it a shot.

"The moment I stepped into that restaurant opened a new chapter in my life that I will remember forever," Tang says in his book.

His first night was a bit of a disaster, as he collided with a customer and dropped two beer glasses that shattered on the floor and silenced the restaurant, with all eyes turned to the humiliated young man.

Three months later, Tang's skin had thickened and he learned money was not easy to come by. He now considers himself fortunate to have had the experience. "I believe everyone will meet trials and tribulations as they grow up, and we should treat such troubles as valuable treasures in the process of learning to live," Tang said.

Looking ahead

Today, eight years after he first went to England, Tang has finished his master's qualification program, meaning he will begin graduate studies in September. He said this next chapter in his story was like a brand new start.

Years of hardship and independence have taught valuable life lessons about the importance of perseverance and accepting responsibility, Tang said. Because he has those qualities, many hail Tang as a model for young overseas students.

But Tang said he would not encourage parents to send young children overseas to study. "They are simply to young to be able to control or take care of themselves. I made many mistakes, and when you live like that, you can only rely on yourself," he said.

With so much behind him, Tang is confident and ambitious in looking towards the future. "I really want to go to an Eastern country, like Japan, for further education after I get my master's because I am determined to learn more about Asian culture."

Notice

Dr. Roberto Rabel, International Director at the University of Otago, will continue our Focus on New Zealand next Monday.

You are welcome to log into our website at: <http://bjtoday.ynet.com>.

Or forward your questions to the host Ayi at: ayi@ynet.com.

Time: 1-2 pm, Monday, September 13

通知

留学聊天室之“新西兰之夏”将在下周邀请奥塔古大学国际部主任, Roberto Rabel博士做客, 通过网络与大家交流。

欢迎大家届时光临我们的网站: <http://bjtoday.ynet.com>。您也可以把问题发送到主持人阿义的信箱, 由他帮您提问: ayi@ynet.com。

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Photos provided by Lincoln University

Town and Country Learning



Derek Chapman

Lincoln University (LU) is one of New Zealand's smaller universities. It specializes in land-based programs and offers a pleasant rural atmosphere within easy distance of a large city.

Derek Chapman, director of Foundations Studies at LU was our guest in the Study Abroad Salon this week, answering reader's questions about Lincoln's academic programs, costs and international student population.

What are some good reasons to pick Lincoln University? — monkeyking

1. Lincoln is the most international university in New Zealand. 2. Quality of programs. 3. Supportive environment. 4. Small size where individual students are important. 6. All degrees geared towards the workplace. 7. International recognition of qualifications.



Where is Lincoln University located? — host

LU is located less than half an hour from the center of Christchurch, the largest city in the South Island of New Zealand.

What are some strong points of Lincoln University?

— rabbitear

All New Zealand universities are excellent, however each specializes in programs they offer. LU specializes in land-based activities and related disciplines.

Lincoln differentiates itself by its size, the applied nature of its degrees, its flexibility and the attention it gives to international students.

How many students are studying at your university? — akaio

Around 4,000 students are studying at LU. This is a special feature of Lincoln and enables staff to work with students on a more individual basis.



How many colleges are there in your university?

— blueocean

LU is divided into four main divisions: agriculture and life sciences; bio-protection and ecology; environment, society and design and commerce.

How many Chinese students are at LU and what are they studying? — host

There are approximately 1,500 and an increasing number are taking science and resource studies options.

Large numbers are enrolling in our English Language for Academic Purposes programs to meet English Language entrance requirements and currently 250 are studying Foundation Studies as a bridging program.

What are the average costs of study? — new plant

Tuition fees depend on course of study, but range from NZ\$15,000 to NZ\$17,000 for undergraduate courses. English Language is NZ\$350 per week, and Foundation Studies is NZ\$14,500.

Living costs range from NZ\$10,000 to NZ\$12,000 per year.

Is it true that Lincoln graduates have an easier time finding jobs and staying in New Zealand? — xiaozhang

A degree is not a guarantee to international students that they will be able to work in NZ, but the government is currently reassessing the entry criteria for work permits.

We expect it to get easier for international graduates to stay and work in NZ in the future.

(Edited by Zhang Nan)



Ask Ayi:

Q: I am a student of international business and economics. My brother graduated from a Singapore university and is now working there. Can I study there in my field?

— johnny1982070

A: Singapore has only three universities, the National University of Singapore, Nanyang Technological University and Singapore Management University, and local study abroad agent Chivast Educational International said they do not take direct transfer students.

A safer route to studying in Singapore may be finishing

your undergraduate studies in China and then applying for a master's degree program in the country.

Q: I completed a three-year bachelor's degree in finance in New Zealand and am applying for master's programs in finance at Canadian universities. My top choices are the University of British Columbia and Queen's University, but they require master's students to have four-year bachelor's degrees. Can I still apply, even though I also do not have GMAT scores?

— herbert_yu

A: Requirements for master's degrees in Canada are

high, and the two universities you mentioned are top-class. You will have to take the GMAT.

One way to get to Canada would be to apply to lower-ranked universities, probably more willing to take students with three-year bachelor's degrees.

Or, you could apply for a bachelor's degree at those two universities. Up to two years of credits from the New Zealand university can be transferred, meaning the course should take only two years. After that, applying to a master's program should be much easier.

(Edited By Zhang Nan)

By Sabu

Even candle addicts are likely to be surprised by the selection at the Home & Beyond shop in the Laitai Flower Market, which sells hundreds of candles of different shapes, styles, colors and scents. Shoppers are also likely to wax poetic about the prices, kept rock bottom because all items come straight from the manufacturer.

Starting small, basic tealights come in bags of 50 for only 9 yuan. Smaller sets of fancier tea candles scented with citronella, orange, vanilla and strawberry fetch 3 yuan to 8 yuan per 10 pack. Even slimmer are buoyant disk candles that come in several colors (0.5 to over 1 yuan each). Floated in bowls and scattered around the house, bathtub or windowsill, these candles add a lot of atmosphere for their size.

The next step up on the candle food chain is the classic votive, available at Home & Beyond in a rainbow of colors at 3 yuan each, 20 yuan for per 12 pack or 30 yuan for a set of 20. Place them on their own in a dark corner to add light and warmth, house them in an attractive flared candle lamp



Photo by Sabu

with a shell-based bottom (25 yuan) or prop them on an iron candlestick (15 yuan).

Most of the store's shelf space is occupied by pillar candles – towering to tiny, round to rectangular, basic white to

modern metallic, they're all there and priced from 5 yuan to 25 yuan. Taper candles (2-3 yuan each) come in nearly as great a variety.

For shoppers looking for more scent than most candles can offer,

the store also sells a selection of incense coils (15-18 yuan per set), perfume oils (10 yuan) and scented sachets (6 yuan).

Where: B1, Laitai Flower Market, Chaoyang **Open:** 9 am - 6 pm **Tel:** 6463 5588-8123



Photos by Li Shuzhuan

Born-again Books

By Wang Yue

Downtown bookstores get full marks for size, but their counterparts in Haidian District are generally more comfortable places to browse and get into the book-buying experience. Of the latter mold is the new Neizai Bookstore, opened by four serious book lovers in May. It is small and a bit hidden, but has already established a reputation among students, academics and others for its nearly unrivaled collection of cheap, top-quality second-hand books.

One proprietor told *Beijing Today* it was hard to find used English books in this city, meaning Neizai's

remarkable collection must represent volumes of work. The shelves are heavy with social science works and novels, which tend towards the classic end of the literary



spectrum. Among the choices are Kipling's *Lucky Jim*, *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck and *Rainbow* by D.H. Lawrence, all priced in the 5 to 20 yuan range.

Shoppers after more modern words are satisfied by titles such as the *Harry Potter* books and Charles Frazier's *Cold Mountain* (20 yuan), while modern history buffs and scandal fans may be more inclined to pick up a restored copy of the controversial *Starr Report* (10 yuan).

The non-fiction selection covers a diverse range of subjects, from philosophy, sociology and psychology to art, music, film, history, Zen meditation and cooking. The driest, but perhaps most useful, titles on offer are reference books, including pocket Portuguese-English and Russian-English dictionaries (20-25 yuan).

There are also many books in other languages, such as German, Japanese, Russian, Hebrew and particularly French. Copies of the Bible are available in several languages.

Where: Yandongyuan, across from east gate of Beijing University, Haidian **Open:** 9:30 am - 9:30 pm **Tel:** 6276 8998

Country Kitsch

By Wang Yao

The Shanghai store Qiankeshu Country Homeware has opened a new local shop in the Dongsu area, a deliberately rustic spot that feels like an archetypal Grandma's house, with wooden cupboards, rocking chairs, tea kettles and sofas upholstered with floral patterned fabrics.

That's not to say the store's goods are aimed at the elderly. Young women are sure to appreciate the wide selection of cute little wooden boxes, perfect for storing keepsakes and small secrets. Some have locks, other are painted with pastoral pictures like hens, farms and windmills and sunflowers swaying



Photo by Sabu

under a blue sky. Prices range from 68 to 128 yuan. Abandon boring paper calendars forever with a clever, interactive and decidedly

low-tech wooden model (88 yuan). The set comes with a brown wooden frame into which 31 small numbered bricks can be slotted. Users literally hang the days of the week themselves and can adjust the calendar to match each month.

Rustic, handmade stools will take shoppers back to the days when few Chinese had sofas in their homes. But they are more steeped in foreign rural tradition, as the seats are painted with pictures of beaches, farmhouses and villas (48 yuan). For far greater comfort, check out the big rocking chairs made of Indonesian hardwood and pine priced at 2,500 yuan.

Where: No.108 Dongsu Nandajie, Dongcheng **Open:** 9 am - 9:30 pm **Tel:** 6524 9529

Chasing Beauty

American Shannon Lee enjoys few things more than the pleasures of a great haircut, a proper manicure or a fine facial. In this new regular column, Shannon will prow the city's countless salons to recommend establishments where Beijingers can be sure to come out more beautiful.

Toni & Guy

By Shannon Lee

With the summer coming to an end and fall on its way, I decided it was high time to try a new hairdo. I figured I would give bangs a test drive. Stars like Jennifer Aniston and Uma Thurman pull them off quite nicely. At a local Xizhimen salon I went in armed with a picture of American pop idol Mandy Moore to show the stylist what I wanted. Instead of leaving with a smile on my face, I left with tears in my eyes and an aching heart. My hair looked terrible! I looked like Garth from the movie *Wayne's World*.

On the recommendation of friends, I made an appointment at Toni & Guy, a top London-based salon with a business here in Beijing. I slinked into the modern style salon, trying not to draw attention to my dreadful do'. I was quickly welcomed by the receptionist and offered a beverage.



Photo by Li Yue

First I had a choice of what level of stylist I wanted. Toni & Guy has a tiered price system for haircuts, with the most experienced stylists at the top at 320 yuan for men and 420 yuan for women, down to the newer

stylists at 100 yuan for men and 120 yuan for women. To insure you get what you want, Tony & Guy provides translators for their non-Chinese speaking customers or for people like me, not fluent or who have already been burned attempting to give instructions in Chinese.

From the second I walked in I felt like a queen. I was given a free consultation on what options I had to fix my hairy problem, an enjoyable hair wash, and then my stylist meticulously cut my hair. My hair was blown dry and styled with Bed Head hair products. I looked great! Toni & Guy transformed me from an unhappy Garth into a pleased Jennifer.

Aside from haircuts, they also provide a wide array of hair services such as color and highlights, perms, straightening, and hair styling for special occasions. A second salon will be opening in Sanlitun in the fall.

Where: No.9 Guanghuaxili, in alley 50 meters north of Guiyou Shopping Center, Chaoyang **Open:** 10 am - 9 pm **Tel:** 6586 4315

Tips on how to get the best haircut:

* Chose a style that corresponds with your lifestyle and hair type. If you are a very busy person then choose a style that does not require a lot of styling time. If you are not sure what styles fit your hair type, it's best to ask your stylist for advice.

* Come prepared with multiple pictures of the style that you want. If you can, bring pictures taken from both the front and back angles.

* Let other people to be your guinea pigs and test salons. Remember, going to a recommended salon is less risky than going into a salon "cold turkey".

* Before you go in a salon, take a peek at the outgoing customers. If there is a constant stream of bad cuts coming out then this is probably not the salon for you.

* Talk with the stylist before they cut your hair; make sure that they know what you want.

* Be persistent! You know your hair the best and what works for you – if the stylist is not going to give you the cut that you want then don't let them take a snip of your locks.

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One bedroom in 140-square-meter new apartment for rent. 500 feet from Zhichun Lu light rail station; TV, ADSL, A/C. Prefer to share with non-native English speaker. Short term may be OK. 2,500 yuan per month. Contact beijing@beijingsuccess.com, 13552955775

Two-bedroom furnished apartment in Wangjing Garden, Chaoyang District; 105 square meters, TV, fridge, washing machine, air con., parking, broad-band Internet access. 3,000 yuan per month. Available immediately; 12-month lease. Contact Ms. Zhang, 13671098276 or e-mail zn6708@yahoo.com.cn

Language Exchange

A Chinese reporter, determined to work as a volunteer for the 2008 Beijing Olympics, is eager to find an English native speaker as a long-term language-exchange partner. Her major is Chinese literature and has a wide social and cultural knowledge. Gentleman with standard pronunciation preferred. Contact: lidongying@ynet.com

Emely, a 19-year-old girl from Sweden, with ESOL grade A, is looking for someone who can teach her Chinese. In exchange she will help you with your English, Swedish or German. Someone living in Wangjing area preferred. Contact 13552470921

I would like to talk to a native English speaker regularly until the end of November. I can teach him/her Chinese, talk about Chinese culture, etc. I have been studying in the US for several years and my English is not bad. Contact xiaobin@gmail.com

Bonnie, an international freight company worker, aged 25, is looking for a native English speaker as a language partner. Her hobbies include music, literature and sports. Contact 8462 6010 (7-10 pm), or e-mail Bonnie_Huang108@hotmail.com

Personals

Miss Liu, an English major, would like to teach and help foreign friends learn Chinese and understand Chinese culture. Contact 6010 4605

I want a friend to teach me English. (I can help him/her change VISA: X, L, F, J, Z, and green card.) Contact 8659 2919, e-mail alen678@163.com

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Exhibitions

Feng Feng Modern Oil Painting Exhibition

Feng Feng uses bold colours that have a raw character. The artist delves into three-dimensional representation, using relief-sculpted forms of Chinese pictorial script, calligraphy and engraving plates. The artist's ardor and passion for classical verse engulf the visual creations, where abstract reduction serves to veil characters and other symbols within his works. The many

Movies

Rickshaw Boy (Luotuo Xiangzi)

In the 1920s, a young, hard-working peasant goes to Beijing to become a rickshaw driver at a time when the city is torn apart by dueling warlords. The rickshaw company owner's daughter falls in love with the boy and, despite a ten-year age difference, decides to marry him.

Not long after their marriage she dies during childbirth and



his world falls apart. Suffering from the pain induced by an archaic society, he falls to the mercy of his environment.

A true Chinese classic from the book by Lao She and a must-see for anyone seeking a deeper understanding of Chinese cinema. Directed by Ling Zifeng, starring Zhang Fengyi, Siqin Gaowa, Yin Xin, Yan Bide and Li Tang.

Where: B2M Bar, Donghey-an Xiaoqu, Ditan Park South Gate **When:** September 13, 8 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6426 1091

Master of Everything (Ziyu Zile)

Based on a true story, *Master of Everything* combines two of Asia's most popular film genres – comedy and *kung fu*. The comedy takes place in the countryside when a villager attempts to produce his own martial-arts film as part of a plan to get the girl of his dreams. Directed by Lee Xin, starring Coco Lee, John Lone and Xia Yu.

Where: Cherry Lane Movie Theatre, 29 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang **When:** 8 pm tonight and Saturday **Admission:** 50 yuan **Tel:** 13501251303

Springtime in a Small Town (Xiaocheng Zhichun)

Tian Zhuangzhuang's masterful remake of the 1948 classic by Fei Mu about a doctor who returns to his hometown after the Sino-Japanese War only to find his old flame has married his best friend. Directed by Tian Zhuangzhuang, starring Hu Jingfan, Xin Baiqing and Wu Jun.

Where: B2M Bar, Donghey-an Xiaoqu, Ditan Park South Gate **When:** September 16, 8 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6426 1091

Jams

A.W.O.L

Absinthe With Out Leave takes three of Lush's favourite performers – Yin Tsang, DJ Usami and The Syndicate – and floats them on a sea of absinthe. Celebrate one year of giving students hangovers.

Where: Lush Bar, 2/F Building 1, Huaqing Jiayuan, Chengfulu, Haidian **When:** Saturday 9:30 pm **Admission:** 20 yuan **Tel:** 8286 3566



Starshaped Box

In honour of Zhao Xing's new book, *Starshaped Box* (*Guoqushi*), and Hang on the Box's EP *Foxylady*, Joyside and Hang on the Box take the stage. Producer Wang Di, Lu Zhong from Scream Records, rock critic Yan Jun, and youth writer Chun Shu will also make an appearance. See and be seen.

Where: Nameless Highland Bar, Building 14, Anhuili Area 1, Yayuncun **When:** Sunday 9:30 pm **Admission:** 30 yuan (20 for students) **Tel:** 6489 1613

Performances

Classic TV Theme Songs

A grand Chinese symphonic music concert will be held by the Chinese Music Orchestra of the China Broadcasting Arts Troupe to perform theme songs and melodies from the TV serial play *A Dream of Red Mansions*. All of the music was composed by Wang Liping for the TV serial more than a decade ago. Based on one of China's four best classical novels, the play was popular among many audiences who loved the melodious tunes. Wang will meet with audience members after the concert.

Where: Poly Theatre, 14 Dongzhimen Nandajie **When:** September 14, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 80-580 yuan **Tel:** 6501 1854



Grand Troupe

More than 220 artists from the China Broadcasting Arts Troupe Chorus, Film Symphony Orchestra and Chinese Music Troupe will commemorate the 100th anniversary of the late statesman Deng Xiaoping in a debut performance. The concert will centre on the period of Deng's leadership, representing his heroic deeds since his youth and his struggles and successes throughout his life.

Where: Poly Theatre, 14 Dongzhimen Nandajie **When:** September 15, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 80-580 yuan **Tel:** 6501 1854

Activities

BJ Hikers: Silver Pagodas Loop

A great overnight hike! There will be plenty of relaxation time, lots of exercise and fabulous views. Turn off your mobile phone, forget about work for a couple of days and enjoy the richness of local culture, cuisine and scenery. This trip is carefully planned just for you.

Where: Changping County, north of Beijing **Pick up:** 9 am at the Lido on Saturday outside Starbucks **Cost:** 500 yuan all inclusive **Tel:** 13910025516

Weekend Trip to Forbidden City in Shenyang

Take an overnight train with the Chinese Culture Club to the new UNESCO-listed site of Gugong (Forbidden City) and see various other sights in Shenyang, Northeast China. Shenyang was the Manchu people's capital before they occupied Beijing and established the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911).

Meet at the Beijing Railway Station at 9 pm tonight and return to Beijing Sunday morning. (We will take a new train with a comfortable and clean sleeper.) **Tel:** 8851 4913 (registration is essential)

TV and Radio Highlights

HBO	
10 Friday	
The Two Towers	9 pm
11 Saturday	
National Security	9 pm
12 Sunday	
Half Past Dead	10:10 pm
13 Monday	
Auto Focus	10:30 pm
14 Tuesday	
The Sum of All Fears	10:30 pm
15 Wednesday	
Live From Baghdad	10 pm
16 Thursday	
Mortal Thoughts	11:25 pm

CCTV-9 Monday - Friday

Around China	6:30 am
Cultural Express	8:30 am
Nature and Science / Chinese Civilization	11:30 am
Cultural Express	2:30 pm
Nature and Science / Chinese Civilization	5:30 pm
Dialogue	7:30 pm
News Updates / Asia Today	8 pm
Sports Scene	11:15 pm
Saturday	
Travelogue	9:30 am
Center Stage	11:30 am
Sunday	
Sports Weekend	10 am
Documentary	10:30 am
This Week	12:30 am

China Radio International 91.5 FM

Monday - Friday	
Easy FM Afternoon	2-7 pm
Fun in Beijing	5-5:30 pm
Joy FM	9:05-11 pm
Saturday	
Music Memories	8:05-11 am
Euro Hit 40	12:05-1 pm
Musique Sans Frontières	6:05-8 pm
Joy FM	9:05-11 pm
Sunday	
Music Memories	8:05-11 am
Jazz Beat	6:05-8 pm
Joy FM	9:05-11 pm

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By Zhang Jianzhong

Music

Meters/bonwe Perfect Show 2004

Ten pop singers and bands: Jay Chow (Zhou Jielun), S.H.E, ENERGY, Jolin (Cai Yilin), eVonne (Xu Huixin), Kemi Xiaozhi, Pan Wilber (Pan Weijie), Jerry (Yan Chengxu), Leung Jasmine (Liang Jingru) and I Mayday (Wu Yuetian) will rock Beijing at the Worker's Stadium.

Where: Beijing Worker's Stadium **When:** September 17, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 120-1,280 yuan **Tel:** 6501 6665 ext. 5033



layers of paint and raw materials employed by Feng Feng work together to transform the history of an ancient country and culture. His efforts denote a remarkable conceptual and artistic achievement.

Where: Qin Gallery, 1-1E Huawei Li, Enjoy Paradise, Chaoyang **When:** daily 9:30 am – 7 pm, September 16-30 **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8779 0458



Speaking Their Own

Four Chinese artists will unite to stage an art exhibition describing their thoughts on life and society through their artworks. Artist Bei Shui produces oil paintings using the techniques of Chinese landscape painting to vividly portray the beautiful scenery and people of his homeland. Xie Wengang is a skillful oil painter who specializes in painting lotus flowers that serve as a poetic gateway

to past memories. Works by Xue Jun feature simple kaleidoscopic colours that illustrate people's admiration and the pursuit for modern life. And Zhuang Bowu applies synthetic materials for an innovative touch to his latest creations.

Where: FaFa Gallery, 1 Xiangjiang Beilu, Chaoyang **When:** daily 10:30 am – 8 pm, September 11-21 **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8450 6688 ext. 310

Venturing into the Far West of China

Works by Chen Jian and Tian Li. Chen Jian is one of the most successful watercolorists in China. His works have been featured regularly at national exhibitions, winning many prizes. The main subject matter of Chen's recent works is the spectacular beauty of the highlands in Xinjiang Autonomous Region and the romance of the daily lives of its ethnic minorities. Chen manages to capture and express all of these elements through his art.



Tian Li, who was trained as a printmaker at the Central Academy of Art, brings out the strong and unique qualities of the medium via her works, which are

both expressive and refreshing.

Where: 3818 Gallery, Dashanzi Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang **When:** until September 26 **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8456 6664, 8688 2525



Voiceless Sound Clear World

Veteran artist Wang Jixian will unfold a different world with his latest paintings at the New Millennium Gallery. The 70-year-old artist completed his new art creations after having researched Buddhist figures and stories recorded in frescoes at Chinese temples. By meshing together his thoughts about traditional life and the diversity of modern people, Wang perfectly visualizes a crystal quiet world of mythical stories and characters to bring a feeling of catharsis to modern-day society.

Where: New Millennium Gallery, Diyang Building, 2 Dongsanhuan Beilu **When:** daily 9 am – 6 pm, September 11-29 **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6453 6193

Chen Nong, the owner, is a photographer originally from South China. Occasional photo exhibitions are a feature at Here, and it is a popular meeting spot for those with an interest in photography. The walls of the cafes four rooms are painted a light shade of green and blue, and instead air-conditioning, ceiling fans hum lazily overhead. Long tables and stools made from plain wood are casually arranged in each room, and a large, 1970s-era,



Wandering around the narrow lanes, eating traditional Beijing-style snack food, lolling in an old-Beijing style bar or watching a drama in one of the local theaters, can give a visitor a real taste of hutong life in a Beijing that has been transformed in recent years, and continues to change at a rate that shows no signs of slowing down.



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